1780—1880.

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Dedication.

To all those who recognize the germinal quality of a great soul; they who believe that the mature soul of Channing was translated still in its infancy; they who would fain stand where Channing would stand to-day, were he permitted to profit, with us, by the experiences of the century gone; they who believe that the star of his ideal is still in the future, and, looking forward, have deeper interest in the century to come than in the century past; to those who would honor Channing by carrying on the work which he began, striving to bequeath to coming generations, not only the unfinished task, but a determination not to cease the labor until the *Dignity of Human Nature*, which Channing taught, will be verified in every market, shop and home,—until the *Universal Brotherhood*, which Channing prophesied, will be realized in the truce of contending dogmas,—the dismantling of sectarian fortifications,—the snapping of the last fetter that enslaves body or soul of man,—and the furling forever of the battle-flags of nations,—until the trust in the *All-Father*, which was Channing's stay, will have supplanted the gloom and fear in every heart; —to such, of whatever name or clime, this number of *Unity* is heartily dedicated.

1780–1880.

THE CENTURY'S GAIN IN OUR RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

BY W. C. GANNETT.

On April 7th a hundred years will have passed away since Channing's birth. In one little chapel within the great cathedral of Christendom will be heard thanksgiving and praise on that day; and from many a larger chapel round the little one will come the sound of scattered voices chiming reverently in the service. The Unitarians in claiming Channing as their own, by the very theory of their position among the Christian sects still more *disclaim* him as their own. So far as they are right in holding theirs to be a Church of the Essential Christianity, their prophets are thereby prophets of the central faiths of man. Their joy, then, is that the world begins to recognize Channing's kinship with those rarer messengers of God whose word, in the main, belongs not to a denomination, not even

to a religion, but to Religion. Channing's apostleship is unto all.

The thirty-eight years since his death in 1842 have done much to increase this recognition. Add to these the years of his life-time, and the century thus completed, more than any previous century since Christianity took name,—that of Luther not excepted,—has been a period of religious emancipation. Channing, as one of the acknowledged leaders of religion in *this* century, is characterized at once as an apostle of Religious Liberty.

But important as they are, the unimportance is always greater than the importance of such leaders. The truthful way in which to honor Channing is to glance, not first at him, but first at the gains won by Religious Liberty during these hundred years.

A hundred years ago Religion in America lay bound in triple bonds. The first bond broke while Channing was a boy; the second in his manhood,—he himself a leader in that emancipation; the third has been breaking ever since his death,—his own work contributing directly, but unintentionally, to this end.

(1.) It was in bondage to the *State*. The outbreak of the Revolution found in most of our Colonies an "Established Church,"—established in the sense in which there is an Established School to-day, in which there still are National Churches abroad; a Public Church system supported by the law. In New England, save in Rhode Island, it was Congregationalism that was thus established; in the South it was Episcopalianism. But the moment that the Declaration of Independence set the Colonies to framing Constitutions for themselves, the drift towards freedom showed itself extending even to religion. Half the Conventions ceased to support the Church by public tax. Yet almost everywhere creed-tests were retained as qualification for holding public office. In New Jersey, South Carolina and Georgia the higher officials had to accept the Protestant religion; in North Carolina, the Protestant religion and the divine authority of Old and New Testaments; in Pennsylvania, belief in God and in the inspiration of the Bible; in Delaware, belief even in the Trinity. In Virginia alone, where the Presbyterians and Baptists, led by free-thinking Thomas Jefferson, stood against the Episcopalians on this question, the famous act of 1785 at last was carried, establishing complete religious freedom.

Two years later showed the rate of drift increasing. Church-establishments were doomed by the very theory of "the people's government." If "the people" were good enough, each one, to take a share in choosing rulers and making their own laws political, they were good enough, each one, to choose their Church and make their own laws ecclesiastical. When the General Constitution was framed in 1787, the framers therefore were ready to agree that "No religious tests shall ever be required as qualification for any office or public trust under the United States;" and the First Amendment clinched that word more strongly still. Then one by one the States began to follow suit and disestablish,—till now, for nearly half a century, the "Voluntary System" of Church-support has been everywhere in vogue among us, the older system lingering only in a few relics like the Sunday Laws. In virtue of that Voluntary System,—"the American discovery in political science,"—the struggle lies behind us and forgotten, which the National Churches of Europe have yet to face; the great struggle which to-day is beginning in England, France and Belgium. And the struggle, be it remembered, towards which two earnest parties in our land are doing their best to drag us back,—the Presbyterian League which is striving to place "God" and "Christ" and "Bible" as labels on the nation's Constitution,—and the Roman Catholics with their apparent purpose that the public treasury shall support sectarian schools or our Free School system cease to be.

(2.) A hundred years ago Religion in America was in bondage to *Calvinism*. Save for the Quakers and a few liberals slowly, timidly, feeling their way to new convictions, in the eastern part of Massachusetts,—save for these the land was a land of a single creed. That creed Orthodox, of course; believing in the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Vicarious Atonement, man's Total Depravity, the Eternal Hell. But more than this: the Congregationalist of New England, the Presbyterian of Pennsylvania, and, although more moderately, even the Episcopalian of Virginia, was a Calvinist. And, always excepting the Episcopalian, the Calvinist of that day *believed* his Calvinism; believed, to-wit, that of a thousand men and women whom God Almighty made, quite possibly the God Almighty had, *before their birth, predestined* nine hundred to step at death into the tortures of the Eternal Hell. It was that belief added to "Orthodoxy" that made it "Calvinism."

But, again nearly coeval with the political Revolution, signs of disaffection from this hideous faith appeared, and by the century's end three different parties were organizing for revolt; the same that a little later were known respectively as "Universalists," the "Christian Connexion," and the "Unitarians." Each had its separate emphases and watchwords: the first, "Salvation Sure for All;" the second, "Bible Simplicity," "Let creeds and sects and parties fall, and Jesus Christ be all in all;" the third, "the Right of Free Inquiry in Religion," "the Harmony of Reason with the Revelation." But all three agreed in being (1) a *Bible* faith; (2) in giving a loud defiant *No* to Calvinism; and soon (3) in giving a *No* almost as loud to the doctrines of Vicarious Atonement and the Trinity. A thirty years' war followed, during which several new sects, were born, all very little sisters in the Church except the Campbellites, to join the anti-Calvinists. But more important far in numbers than all these put together, rose the Methodists, orthodox in all things else, but eager to throw the solid weight of their denial against the lurid fatalism. In 1780 the Methodists counted as an almost literal zero in this country; to-day who counts so many zero-places on the census-tables?

And what shall be said of the elder sisters in the Church? This, at least: that the Baptists now di-

vide themselves upon the Free-Will line; that to-day the Congregationalists as a whole are scarcely "Calvinisticalish" in their Calvinism; and that even among Presbyterians one must hunt farther to find a full and hearty and avowed and satisfied believer in the thing than a hundred years ago to find a hearty disbeliever; and that the very Revivalist wins souls to heaven to-day by picturing the grace of God rather than tries to scare them thither by picturing the clutch and the flames of his predetermined wrath.

(3.) A hundred years ago Religion was in bondage to the *Bible*. In 1780 to deny that a Revelation had happened in Palestine eighteen centuries before was as absurd and dangerous as to doubt the Revolution happening then and there among the Colonies. Long after 1800 it made a man uncanny to own to sympathy with Thomas Paine or the French Deists. Each one of those three parties in revolt from Calvinism,—the Unitarian no less than the others,—took its stand on Bible-ground; each fought its fight with Bible-texts for weapons; each in turn by Bible-faithfulness was gradually led on to discard the doctrines of the Trinity and Vicarious Atonement. It would be hard to find elsewhere in modern Christendom such strenuous Bible-literalists as some of those "little sister" sects just spoken of,—the so-called "Church of God," for instance, who to Baptism and the Supper add Feet washing as an ordinance, and celebrate the Supper sitting and at evening, in order to exactly tally with the Bible-incidents. In truth, the escape from orthodoxy, like Luther's escape from Romanism, was almost into an *intenser* Bible-bondage,—except among the Unitarian band.

In that band,—Bible-men, loyal believers in the Revelation, as they were,—the principle that Revelation must be in harmony with Reason had been from the outset a signal of real emancipation: if they had known how real, how speedy, it might have made them halt. The State-bond had snapped; Calvin's bond was giving way; but the half-century went by, Channing lived and taught and was about to pass away, before the Bible-bond began to break and the third declaration of religious independence to be noticeably uttered. Then, about 1840, in Emerson and Parker, religion in America took its stand simply on soul-to-Soul relations between man and God,—Human Nature its source and guarantee; Reason its interpreter; Jesus its prophet, but not its supernatural revealer; the Bible but one scripture, noble yet not altogether noble, among the aspirations of the past; "Law" the eternal fact, and "Miracle" the passing misconception of it; and both God and the soul so realized that "Our Father who art in the heavens *within*" became the natural thought.

Emerson and Parker were but signs,—heralds of what was on the way. What progress since their early day, as the use of the method called "Historic Criticism" has been learned! As the new science called "Comparative Theology" has been opened! As the physical sciences have been reconstructing the universe on grander space and time-scales before men's thought! Not the Free-thinker, nor the little Christian sect that scarcely cares to longer claim the title "Evangelical," not these alone, but the great plains of Orthodoxy itself have felt the tumult of the coming Spring through all their secret places. Nor even in the secret places only. To-day Creeds hold their rank like modern Kings,—the basis of "Divine Right" crumbling fast beneath them. To-day the Character of God and man is still debased by many a favorite emphasis,—and yet, as tested by pulpit, platform, newspaper, Convention or Alliance, the essentials of Christianity and even of Religion seem to receive more stress, the non-essentials less, with every decade. And to-day many an orthodox Professor says braver words about the Bible, really trusts more to Reason in Religion, and yet is "orthodox,"—than the Unitarian heretics of 1825!

All this gain for "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion" since Channing's birth in 1780! Can Unitarianism claim the credit of it? Simply as an early consequence in any great movement of the mind, itself becomes a partial cause of later consequences. Even "leaven" is an over-boastful name for Unitarianism. Can Channing claim much credit for it? Only as one among a host of leaders, here and abroad, some working in lines theological, some in the pathsof science, some in the ways of history, some in the ways of philanthropy and social reform. Only as one among a host. But among them all it may be doubted if any one has done more to bring Freedom into the Faith, and keep Faith amid the Freedom, of to-day, than the frail man with the yearning eyes whose birthday the lovers of Faith-with-Freedom are about to celebrate.

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

A SKETCH OF THE MAN, THE THEOLOGIAN, THE REFORMER.

BY JOS. H. ALLEN,
Lecturer on Ecclesiastical History in Harvard University.

The life of Dr. Channing extends just over sixty-two years, from 1780 to 1842. His childhood was spent at Newport, Rhode Island, where his mind received a very serious bent from that eccentric, stern and Godly old Calvinist, Dr. Hopkins,—whose name is best known from his famous tenet, that the true test of fitness to be saved is willingness to be damned for the glory of God. By that extraordinary tenet the name "Hopkinsian" has been conserved in sectarian tradition to this day. The boy Channing was little of person, gentle and serious of temper; yet one story is told, to his credit, of a time when that gentle temper flamed out into wrath, and into something of a school-boy fight (I believe) in defence of some younger comrade. No one who saw him in manhood would suspect that he had ever been capable of wrath. That one flash of it was a symptom of moral health. His walks by the beach, and the fresh wind and rolling surge of the Atlantic, did a good deal, he says, to nurture a certain dreamy and fervent sympathy with nature: his spiritual horizon, all through his life, kept always that level width. "No spot on earth," he once said,

"has helped to form me so much as that beach." Except this sympathy with nature, and a sensitiveness of organization almost feminine, there was little to distinguish him at twenty—though his graduating oration at eighteen has left a tradition of eloquent fervor,—little, that is, of native genius or intellectual force to distinguish him from a goodly number of serious and generous and cultivated young men, who graduate year by year from our American colleges.

His first larger experience of life was had in Richmond, Virginia, where, I imagine, his position as teacher helped seclude him from any wide range of social intercourse, as well as his even temper of mind, and his moral repugnance to the state of society there, which came out long afterwards in his hostility to slavery. But, in particular, it was in the solitary reflection of these years that he quite outgrew and firmly renounced the narrow creed of his youth—or what there was narrow in it,—and found himself, intelligently and consistently, in the ranks of liberal thinkers. I should say, however, that the process with him was not one of criticism, hardly of investigation, but an even, natural, and very devout religious growth. Every step of it was taken, not merely with anxious deliberation, but with a certain tender, solicitous, remorseful, conscientious, pleading piety, and religious discipline of soul, which make the record of those years like the record of old saints and pietists. The prospect was rather that of a morbid introspective pietism, than of a manly, courageous, cheerful and healthy religious life, which it afterwards so largely became.

To this somewhat hectic experience and temper of that time we have to add a great loss of bodily health and vigor from the exposures of his sea-voyage home. Physically he was never a robust man, never I should suppose well in health, after those years of his stay in Richmond. His stature was small, his frame attenuated, his face thin. The clear, wide brow, the great, solemn, wistful eyes, the low, melodious and flaming speech,—these were native gifts potent to win through a strong and sweet persuasion; but they were united in him with a physical frailty that might seem to forbid the hope of any serious life-work, and with a bodily frame that seemed but enough (to cite the words of Dr. Bellows) to anchor his soul to the earth. He was never quite an invalid, but he was always a valetudinarian. In particular, he had a singular sensitiveness to cold; and the recollection of many of his friends will recall his presence, oftenest, at the fireside corner of his warmly-sheltered and softly-furnished room. That soft and warm shelter he seemed always to crave and need, as much as a sick child. What to a more vigorous man would be indolent indulgence, with him was a necessity of life, and the condition of any working force. Circumstances gave him, through all his working and his declining years, this necessary shelter, and screened him from the raw wind of the world by the surroundings and the housings of sufficient wealth. His virtue lay not in manly struggle with difficulty and hardship, but in the consecration of life-long leisure and ample opportunity to something very different from a selfish luxury.

A very genuine and great moral power this tenderly nurtured mind became, and is felt to this day, —warm, life-generating, spring-like,—among all the more turbulent forces that play upon the world. The process, too, by which it grew to this great spiritual predominance and power was as gentle and patient as the spring growth in which its buds began to swell. Somewhere about the age of thirty, his name began to win upon the public ear as a preacher of singular fervor and beauty of utterance, along with the more brilliant reputation of Buckminster, then at its height. It is not easy to describe, though it is perhaps not very difficult to imagine, the manner and gifts that won their way so surely. In his own place in the Federal Street pulpit I heard him only once, and saw him only once or twice besides—barely enough to verify the impression which others have recorded. From the stilted and awkward height of that old-fashioned lofty mahogany pulpit, with its tall balustraded flights of stairs, his face beamed down, it might be said without exaggeration, like the face of an angel, and his voice floated down like a voice from higher spheres. I cannot think of any other preacher of those who can fairly be called popular, to whom that distant altitude, so lifting him away from his congregation, might be called even a positive help. His voice, again, was of rare power and attraction, —clear, melodious, flowing, slightly plaintive, so as curiously to catch and win upon the hearer's sympathy: its melody and pathos in the reading of a hymn was alone a charm that might bring men to the listening, like the attraction of sweet music. Often, too, when the signs of physical frailty were apparent, it might be said that his speech was watched and waited for with that sort of hush, as if one were waiting to catch his last earthly words. All the strength that was in the man went out from him in pure spiritual fervor and uplifting moral force. Any speech that could be called eloquent, or any eloquence that could be called popular, could not possibly have depended less than his on what are commonly called oratorical gifts; could not possibly have consisted, more than his, in the qualities that make a pure disembodied spiritual radiance.

We may reckon ten years of professional life before his name began to be known publicly as a leader in religious thought; and again fifteen more, before it began to be heard in a wider sphere, as it was for about ten years, in the discussion of the gravest questions of morals and politics. So that his professional life has three stages, as preacher, as theologian, and as reformer.

It is no part of my purpose to criticise or discuss the work of these three periods. There is, however, a view to be taken of his work, which is quite necessary, to understand the peculiar place it holds in our religious development, and especially to show how it connects itself with what went before and after in the particular movement of thought to which that work belonged.

Of his gifts purely personal I have spoken. But

there are two things, besides, that are very characteristic of his mind, and that, in their combination, seem best to define the nature of the movement of which he was so eminent a leader.

The first was *a very keen and almost morbid sense of moral evil.* This "conviction of sin" was quite as genuine a fruit as any, from the stern old Calvinistic stock out of which his own faith grew. It differed however in him, very widely, from the two forms in which it is most commonly found, and which are appealed to by religionists generally with most emphasis and effect. That sort of conversion, or religious crisis, of which Augustine's is the most famous and Bunyan's the most familiar type, could never have been the experience of Channing. It was when he was still a child that he quite outgrew, on one side at least, his liability to that great shock and catastrophe of religious fear. He had heard a sermon on the terrors of the Lord, which to his childish mind seemed to wrap life all around, and the bright world itself, in gloom and dread: surely, he thought, if this is true, none of us can ever smile again. But his father, who was a serious man, seemed to feel none of this alarm; and his cheerful unconcern gave the boy at first a shock like jesting at a funeral—but soon convinced him, once for all, that the whole thing was unreal and untrue. The grave sense of evil, the real "conviction of sin," was not diminished; but, happily for that clear conscience and sensitive organization, it never lay to his thought against that lurid background of a universe of horror.

It was impossible, too, that his dreamy meditative boyhood, the simple purity of his country life, the high and devout temper of thought so early trained, should ever be made the basis of the keen self-reproach, the passionate remorse, the agonized inward struggle, which with so many men of saintly virtue have been the narrow gateway of the higher life. It must have been a calm ascent, and not a sharp conflict against spiritual foes that beset the climbing. That life was from the first a process, a culture, a growth, not a warfare, a fight, a victory. I do not remember that he hints anywhere at a knowledge or an understanding of spiritual conflict, such as one would have to whom that conflict had been very real. Whatever lack of intensity, of the deeper springs of moral power, has been found in his life or writings, makes them so much the more genuine expression of a religious nurture singularly passionless and calm; and so, the more characteristic of his special method and power.

And again, that conviction of sin was not intensified, as it is with many, by the spectacle of the grosser wrongs or sufferings among men. His experience of life was in the main placid, secluded, uneventful. Even slavery—and much more, the inhumanities of street, factory, mine, hospital, or prison—lay in his mind not so much as vivid pictures of wrong inflicted and suffering endured; but rather as the shadow, intense and deep in quality but very dim in outline, that darkened his broad and generous idealizings of human life. He saw the particular fact, when his mind dwelt upon it at all, in its broad relations. That keen and troubled sense of a deep reality in what human life displays of evil was always with him,—if nothing more, at least as a dim background to relieve his far more vivid conception of spiritual truth and right. But the action of his imagination upon the facts and forms that made up the picture was brooding and slow. As far as it affected his appeals and efforts in behalf of goodness, it was more in a vague general way, to deepen the tone, quicken the motive, and give distinct sense of elevation to the religious life, than to intensify it by the passion and the dread of sin. So that here, too, a certain breadth and placidity, rather than vehemence and depth, marks the quality of his power.

It is only against some opposing evil that any form of goodness can be felt, as motive or as fact. In a similar way it is only as violation of the highest good that our minds can know, that we really feel the dread and power of wrong. The Calvinistic scheme, which Channing was taught in his youth, gave a very keen sense of sin, in the soul or in the world, as enmity and rebellion against the sovereignty of God. This necessary contrast, this sustaining force, Channing found in *his favorite doctrine of the Dignity of Human Nature.* This topic, more than any other, made the burden of his preaching, and the central point, from which he reached out towards the Right he upheld on one side, or the Wrong he attacked on the other. This new gospel of Humanity—remote alike from religious terror and irreligious contempt—made Channing's message to his generation. The dignity of human nature he elevated into a religious dogma, as with himself it was an inspiration and a creed. How far it consisted with the facts of human nature was no more his care, than how far the facts of human life consist with the moral providence of God. "So much the worse for the facts." At any rate, those facts were screened from his eye,—at least greatly softened and dimmed in outline,—by the peculiar seclusion that sheltered while it developed his religious life. It was a *generous* faith: full of a noble confidence in man's nature and destiny,—full of a noble sympathy with what is best in all forms of natural goodness; full of a noble aspiration towards a better earthly future for man, and the redress of all evils in society, as well as the victories of conscience in the soul. And this "gospel of Humanity" was a form of modern piety all the more strongly marked in him, because relieved against that earnest and sincere, but dreadful and implacable, belief, from which the religious experience of his early years had set him free.

The thought has been made quite too familiar to us, as part of the peculiar gospel of our time, to need dwelling on here. But it may be worth while to notice, very briefly, how from this central position Dr. Channing met and did those tasks which have made his name best known, and given it the widest influence.

There are, first, three or four discourses of Doctrine—the same which made him the unchallenged and ever revered leader of his own religious body. It was the event which more than any other one gave them the courage of their convictions and con-

fidence of their future—when in Baltimore, in 1819, he took up one by one, in calm and deliberate attack, the series of opinions by which Orthodox is distinguished from Liberal Christianity. It was not in the way of learned, critical, scholarly discussion: that he left to men otherwise qualified and gifted. It was simply in the way of eloquent, fervent, elevated appeal, against the wrong done to the character of God, the blight put upon the life of man, by a scheme so full (as he regarded it) of unreason, inhumanity, and gloom. The delivery of this discourse was an event, because it publicly enlisted the most eloquent, best known and most honored minister of Boston on one side as against the other; because it did more than any other one thing to crystallize the forces and convictions of the liberal party among New England Congregationalists, then only beginning to be known as Unitarian.

To what might be called the speculative side of this movement Channing did not make any very distinct contribution of thought: his sympathies were large and liberal; his opinions in matters of theology were simply the common thought of the more serious, devout, conservative, of those who had outgrown the ancient creed. His intellectual method was a firm but gentle dogmatism. Religious truth with him was more a matter of contemplation than of study or clear definition. Natural or critical science he knew very little about. He was content with great vagueness of view, provided the religious want of his mind was fairly met: thus he hovered always on the edge of an Arianism in which a soberer thinker would hardly find rest or satisfaction; and was content to say that we know too little about the ultimate nature of matter to criticise the story of the Ascension. His strong points were not these; but those wide and generous views of the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, the Dignity of Human Nature, the Free Communion of the ideal Church, which made the theme of discourse in several volumes of eloquent and noble sermons, and constitute still the best body of practical divinity that the Unitarian movement in this country has produced.

It was in the midst of these labors, and in the second period (as I have called it) of his public life, that he sounded the first distinct note of that practical Christian philanthropy, with which his name has been most widely and honorably connected—in a sermon on that most sacred and beneficent mission among the poor, begun by his near friend Joseph Tuckerman. This has been the most characteristic, the best organized, and far the most successful co-operative work that the Unitarian body has ever attempted by way of church action: perhaps Channing's word did as much as any man's to dignify and endear it in the heart of its munificent supporters, to this day. From this the step was easy to those questions of Temperance and Education which now began to show themselves in new shapes; and from these again to those which lay upon the border line of morals and politics—viz: War and Slavery. The spirit and the main line of argument with which he would approach such topics as these may easily enough be taken for granted, as soon as we know his general cast of thought. Happily for him, the public temper had not become so roused and jealous regarding any of them as it has been since; and, though there was some regret, some remonstrance, some resentment perhaps, yet there was not the angry hostility which even the gentlest word on some of these matters would have been sure to provoke a few years later.

(*To be concluded in next number.*)

CHANNING.

1842.

I watch the circle of the eternal years,
  And read forever in the storied page
One lengthened roll of blood, and wrong, and tears,—
  One onward step of Truth from age to age.

Men slay the prophets; fagot, rack and cross
  Make up the groaning record of the past;
But Evil's triumphs are her endless loss,
  And sovereign Beauty wins the soul at last.

No power can die that ever wrought for Truth:
  Thereby a law of Nature it became,
And lives unwithered in its sinewy youth
  When he who called it forth is but a name.

Thou livest in the life of all good things;
  The words thou spak'st for freedom shall not die.
Thou sleepest not, for now thy faith has wings
  To soar where hence thy hope could hardly fly.

Thou art not idle: in thy higher sphere
  Thy spirit bends itself to loving tasks,
And strength, to perfect what it dreamed of here,
  Is all the crown and glory that it asks.

And often, from that other world, on this
  Some gleams, from great souls gone before, may shine,
To shed on struggling hearts a clearer bliss,
  And clothe the Right with lustre more divine.

From off the starry mountain-peak of song
  Thy spirit shows me in the coming time
An earth unwithered by the foot of Wrong,—
  A race revering its own soul sublime!

—*James Russell Lowell.*

CHANNING THE PREACHER.

BY C. A. BARTOL.

That Mirabeau was a born orator appeared, said one, in the shape of his mouth: and Channing could not have shown the large and open delivery that characterized him save by reason of a physical conformation to happy speech. What a cathedral-voice he had, was evinced in the ringing and resonant tones, it issued with, when the man was almost too weak to stand and deliver it, and became utterly spent not so much with the effort he made as with the divine declamation to which some prompter in him impelled. His slender figure dilated in the church and he swam in the audience which was like a sea he plunged into from the pulpit; and yet he was so independent of the excitement and response that if, at the last, he did not feel quite com-

petent to address the multitude that had come to hear him, he would beckon to the colleague, who was so abundant in labor and willing to do more than his part, to take his place. Inspired as Channing was, he needed to be prepared. He was not comparatively good in an impromptu, and such of his extemporaneous addresses as it was my privilege to hear had no singular excellence or success, while in no preacher was the gift more marked of eloquent and fervent outpouring of the spirit than in Ezra Stiles Gannett, his associate and compeer. Dr. Channing, for his best prosperity in the pulpit, could never trust to the impulse of the moment, but must contemplate his subject and the occasion in his study and from afar. His discourse was not a jet, but a stream. He gave to the people no flashes, but views. He employed, if I may use the figure, a galvanic battery, not the electric jar.

There was nothing witty, brilliant, ingenious or what we call felicitous in the themes he handled or the points he made. He chose to deal only with great matters, however simple and commonplace; and an unaffected naturalness, simplicity, sincerity and earnestness distinguished his style. There were in his manner no surprising turns, manœuvres or flank movements. He fought a frank battle with error and iniquity on the open field. His originality was less in the novelty of his suggestions than in his identification of himself with his case or his cause. I do not think it too much to say that his calm resembled, and perhaps was caught from, that of the Master to whom in the largest fashion of friendship he was so loyal to the end of his days, and whom he longed and expected to see in heaven. It was my privilege as a young divinity student, now nearly fifty years ago, to hear both Channing and Father Taylor, the world-famous Bethel preacher, on the same day. If I was more enlightened and steadied, in "Federal street," in the morning, I was more stirred and warmed in the afternoon at "North Square." I shall have to confess that, in contrast with the Methodist,—who told me afterwards with a laugh when I asked him for a subject, that his text would be too hot for me to hold,—the Liberal Unitarian seemed rather cool; and I have not recovered from the impression that it was the difference of great talent from great genius that I had observed in the two men. But there was an elevation in Channing all his own, a

> "Sailing with supreme dominion
> Through the boundless fields of air,"

a lofty and smooth eagle-flight, which lifted him above and set him apart from common men: and the height was not so much of imagination as of aim.

So I shall add, that in no instance, in the ministerial profession has a person's character been more shown in his words. What is saturated with spirit *goes*, though in but a whisper from the lips: and how his syllables went into the congregation,—and sought out every cranny in the galleries and crevice of the pews! Small, if any, was the complaint of his not being heard! His accent was audibleness. Every loud utterance or lisp became an instantaneous echo, as shouts or under-tones are returned, in the silence, across a clear lake from a sheer mountain-side. What a stillness in the company was the medium for what he spoke! What an awakening of thought and conscience, memory, hope and a love refined into such holiness that no earthly taint was left, waited on the articulations so musical and so urgent, as they were so peculiarly distinct, of that persuasive tongue! Since the Scriptures left the pens or were vocal from the mouths of prophets and apostles, and since the Good News were sounded from him who "spake as never man spake," we have had no more devoted and biblical man,—biblical in the mode of his appeal, and in his directness of purpose and his freedom from any ulterior or collateral design.

Channing's earlier preaching is said to have been more practical and pungent to the moral sense than the latter, whose ideality we so well know. Few, if any, now in the world can remember the time when the lowly man preferred for his ministrations the smaller place which his power was to make so eminent in Boston. By the tides of business and time, the old building—to which having walked with him I can testify he knew through the town the nearest way—has been long ago removed. It is pity we have not or could not have, as a memorial of his initiation and first effects on the public mind, a volume printed of what he habitually said, soon after the nineteenth century began, not for the speculative but ethical and religious interest it would present. Doubtless he grew continually in all the dimensions of spiritual depth and breadth and height, every day that he lived. His old age was his youth, the most vigorous, enterprising and hopeful part of his career, although his preaching then was seldom in the temple and mostly through the press. What a sounding-board was the continent for all he published against slavery and for freedom of body and soul, and what a tabernacle for him, even out of resistance and reproach, all denominations were to build! To a fine ear, that remembers the tones of the meeting-house, the sermon cannot be distinguished in the essay.

It was one of my chief pleasures to listen, in Newport, which seeks now to commemorate Channing with a new church, to his discourse at the dedication there of the Unitarian Congregational Church, in 1836, a little more than six years before he died. It fell like a symphony of Beethoven on the ear. It transported every hearer into a heavenly air. It melted while it lifted the heart. Of any attempt to make an impression there was in it no sign,—as there could not have been in that swan-song, at Lenox, over British emancipation in Jamaica, a reverberation or accompaniment, as it was, of Miriam's timbrel as she stood on the hither side of the Red Sea. That Channing honored the vocation he loved, must be the conviction of all now in it, of every name.

A religious lady, finding Channing's work on my table, was horror-struck. I told her that if we ever got to heaven we should find Dr. Channing revolving around the central Light in an orbit immeasurably nearer than ours.—*F. W. Robertson.*

CHANNING'S RELIGIOUS VIEWS.

BY E. S. GANNETT,
Dr. Channing's Colleague and Successor at Federal St. Church.
(*Extracts from Address as Delivered in 1842 and 1867.*)

Deeper even than his love of liberty was the sentiment of religion. His religion pervaded and filled his being, it was the strength and joy of his soul. So devoid was he of austerity or artificial solemnity, such a calm simplicity ran through his whole life, that the depth of religious emotion which lay within his heart may not have been known to most observers. In him religion wrought with less opposition from appetite or self-will than she must generally encounter in her endeavors to form the soul into the likeness of the Divine image, and in him therefore was seen that "beauty of holiness," which shown through the habits of his daily life like the sunlight through the clouds which it fills with radiance.

Dr. Channing's piety was founded on the Christian revelation of "the Father." It was the piety of profound reverence tempered by filial love. The goodness of God was reflected upon his heart from everything in the creation. In the Divine Providence he placed a trust so grateful, patient, and entire, that it seemed like a child's confidence in a parent's care,—and such it was. His conceptions of the Divine government were singularily *real*, and they gave him a composure of spirit and a steadfastness of hope that have seldom been equalled. To his view the "exceeding sinfulness" of sin was manifest from its character of opposition or insensibility to a God, who revealed himself, in his laws and judgments not less than in his gifts, as Love. Whatever darkened or confused the image of the Father as set before man in the Gospel, he regarded with the utmost grief and was most anxious to remove. He wished that others might see, with him, the Infinite Father seated on the throne of the universe. With this tender and reverential piety he united a conscientiousness that that was worthy to be its companion. I never saw another man in whom the principle of rectitude was so strong and wakeful. It was this alone that ever made me afraid of him, but I did stand in fear of that judgment which would never let partiality, nor compassion even, blind him to any compromise of personal integrity. Always ready to be as lenient as the truth would permit, his discernment of moral obliquity was too keen and the impression it made on him to deep to allow any one who wished to retain his esteem to deviate from the line of right.

Central among his religious convictions was his faith in Christianity. To him the Christian religion was God's "unspeakable gift." It was his study and his delight; the occasion of an unutterable gratitude and an unquenchable hope. Jesus was the messenger and the revelation of the Father, the manifestation and pledge of the Divine love to man. On this theme, oh! how eloquently would he speak; with the eloquence of faith, and feeling and experience. Christianity, in his estimation, was not so much stamped as impregnated with divinity. Its revelations he welcomed, its commandments he received, its promises he cherished. On the Christian religion he built all his hopes for the individual and for the race. With him it was at once the bow of promise and the instrument of regeneration. The character of Christ he studied with intense interest. He there enlarged and rectified his knowledge of God; he there learned the destiny of man. Jesus glorified through suffering, a Conquerer and a Savior through submission to death, was a theme which kindled his soul into Apostolic rapture. From the cross he saw beams of mercy descending upon a dark and sinful world. How have our hearts, my brethren, thrilled as his simple words of faith and love, uttered over the memorials of our Lord's passion, have carried us to Calvary, and from Calvary to heaven.

He had hope for man, and he had faith in man. This faith in the capabilities and destinies of human nature was perhaps his most conspicuous peculiarity. As a theologian and a preacher, it was unquestionably that which distinguished him. The worth of man, in the sight of God; the worth of man, as the creature of God,and the possessor of faculties on which are imprinted the laws of boundless expansion and endless growth; the worth of man, as attested by the blood of Christ shed for his redemption; the worth of man, as therefore the fact which lies at the foundation of all religious aspiration or effort, teaching or culture, it seemed to be made the special office of this minister of the truth to establish in the belief of his fellow-men. He saw them blind to this, the most important fact concerning themselves. The theology of the Christian world denied this fact, and its religion passed it by without notice. He felt himself called to become its expounder and defender. Dr. Channing had no love of controversy; it was foreign from his gentle spirit and his pure tastes. But when he saw the character of the Heavnly Father misunderstood and traduced, and man made the victim as well as the subject of his brother's misrepresentation, he felt himself bound to expose the enormity of such errors. So inveterate was the belief respecting man's native vileness, so did it color all religious teaching and affect religious experience, that he spoke and wrote on this subject with a strength of expression, and a frequency, that may have created an impression that he either exaggerated or overvalued the true doctrine. But was it so? His doctrine was, that human nature is God's work, and therefore cannot be vile; that it is the most wonderful work of his hands with which we are acquainted, and therefore should be treated with respect; that it is made in the "image of God," and therefore is worthy of the highest consideration. He demanded reverence for human nature as it comes from the hands of the Creator, and he said that both justice and piety require us to regard it with serious and grateful reverence. Was he not right? He did not ask you to reverence human *character*, nor man as he appears with the signatures of his Divine origin effaced and his spiritual being foul with sin; but human *nature*, as God sends it down from his own creative will,

when he makes the new-born being "a living soul." On this doctrine Dr. Channing founded the most solemn expositions of duty, and the most fearful exposures of sin. The dignity of human nature proved the degradation of the sinner. The guilt was shown to be in proportion to the fall. Others may have indiscreetly handled this doctrine, and not only turned it from its proper uses, but mistaken its character, and so have wrought mischief in the name of truth; but this cannot impair the correctness or the value of the representations, which he so vividly displayed and so forcibly maintained, that they affected men as if a new discovery had flashed upon their minds. It is through the exhibition of his views of human nature, that Dr. Channing will probably hereafter hold his place among the great religious teachers of his age and of posterity.

In regard to the authority of Scripture, the supernatural mission and the miracles of Christ, the importance of religious institutions, and the articles of belief which distinguish the Unitarian body from the rest of the Christian Church, he neither hesitated nor wavered. He has been cited as one who lent his countenance to the most radical doctrines; and, again, been represented as adopting at the close of his life a faith which he always repudiated. Such contradictory statements find their reconciliation in the independence of ecclesiastical or social control which he asserted and defended. It is easy to select from his writings passages that may be used to support either side; just as it is easy to draw opposite lessons from the Bible. Only he who looks at but one aspect of truth is sure of never being quoted against himself. If Dr. Channing was the champion of freedom, he was not less the apostle of faith. If he encouraged inquiry, he did not renounce authority. If he was hopeful for the future, he was not disdainful of the past.

As he grew older, after meditation and prayer had wrought their work in raising his mind into a clearer atmosphere, he, doubtless, saw the relations of truth, saw truth itself, the manifold truth which it belongs to the religious teacher to expound, as he had not seen them in earlier life. He enjoyed the recompense of that mental fairness, without which progress is only the exchange of one prejudice for another. He would not permit his views to be circumscribed by sectarian bounds, and retreated from any attempt at denominational organization. In this sense, and in no other, he meant to be understood when he said, that, as he advanced in life, he became less a Unitarian. In his almost passionate eagerness to reach more of that truth to which a finite intelligence must be for ever climbing, denial of error could not satisfy him. The positive doctrines which he had done so much to spread, he never discarded nor undervalued. He died, as he lived, waiting for more, but thankful for that which he had; catching the whispers of the Spirit to his own soul, but not skeptical in regard to its more audible speech to other listeners.

Every institution is but the lengthened shadow of some great man.—*Emerson.*

CHANNING'S INFLUENCE ON UNIVERSALISM.

BY I. M. ATWOOD.

[President of the Universalist Theological School, at Canton, N. Y.]

The great name of Unitarianism is Channing. The great name of Universalism is Ballou. These men owe some part of their prominence in their respective denominations to historical position. They were near the beginnings of the movements they did so much to direct,—the first master-minds that exerted a controlling influence in the councils of each. But the larger part of their fame and power is due to exceptional endowments. They had providential opportunities; but still more, they were providential men.

It is more easy to contrast than to compare these great Church Fathers of the modern era. Ballou was ten years the senior, as he was also ten years the survivor, of Channing. They came of essentially the same New England stock; but one was tall and stalwart, while the other was short and slight. Both were early imbued with a severe type of Calvinism, and both were soon repelled from it. But while Ballou enjoyed only the most meagre educational and social advantages, Channing was, perhaps, as fortunate in both respects as any young American of his time. Again, Ballou revolted from Calvinism as a caricature of God. Channing was particularly offended with it because it maligned human nature and extinguished the hope of human improvement. Ballou was by constitution a thinker and a logician: Channing was a philosopher and a poet. It was not accident, therefore, which determined one to be a theologian and a controversialist, and the other a reformer and a philanthropist.

The Universalist and Unitarian bodies have been distinguished by traits which might almost be described as inheritances from the two eminent fathers. They had a nearly contemporaneous origin. Both arose in New England and have flourished chiefly there. They are so alike that the public classes them together, and the mention of the one calls up the image of the other. Yet their types are distinct. In the early day Universalism made its appeal to, and had its vocation among, the common people; while Unitarianism addressed a smaller and select class. In that day almost every Unitarian preacher was a graduate of Harvard College. At the same time the college graduates in the Universalist ministry might have been counted on the fingers of one hand. The one sect had exceptional culture, wealth, social position. The other stood in sharp contrast to it in each particular. Changes came gradually over both denominations, and they are in most respects less unlike to-day than they were at the beginning of the century. Standing in such close fellowship of thought and competing for occupancy of the same territory, it could not be otherwise than that they should mutually affect each other. There is some ground for the opinion that Universalism has wrought quite as potently, to say the least, in the Unitarian body, as Unitarianism has in the Universalist communion. But we

note here only the latter: or more narrowly, the influence of Channing on Universalism.

It may sound like a truism to say that a man cannot impart what he does not possess. But the import of this maxim is apt to be overlooked in estimating a man's influence. It is thought he may be a power beyond his personal value by force of intellect or eloquence of speech. But it is not a man's thoughts or words so much as a subtle personal element of character, felt through his words, that exerts influence. Dr. Channing's word was at the same time graceful and strong, illuminating and quickening. But it may be doubted whether it was so much superior in fact or form to that of some of his literary and religious compeers. His word was powerful, chiefly, because it was Channing's word. A great soul, a majestic and transparent moral nature, was discerned behind the word.

This, then, was what Channing had to give—moral discernment, moral conviction, moral enthusiasm, raised to the highest power in a character of unique moral elevation. The range of his thinking was far above the ordinary levels. Whatever theme he touched was immediately lifted up and displayed in its universal relations. On his tongue or pen no topic could be trivial, no interest narrow, no suggestion commonplace. The grandeur of the world, the dignity of life, the glory of virtue, became obvious verities when he held the glass to your eye. To all who had any capacity of appreciation for this new and loftier realm disclosed by Channing, he became at once apostle and oracle. Universalists, and in particular the Universalist clergy, felt spiritual kinship with Channing from an early day. He has not had more appreciative students anywhere than the present generation of Universalist ministers. Even before that wise stroke of liberal policy, inaugurated by the Unitarian Association, which placed a copy of Channing's works in the library of every minister who asked for it, the study of a Universalist clergyman was not thought to be fully equipped without this literary and religious thesaurus.

It scarcely needs be said that Channing has preached in Universalist pulpits for many years. His great spirit and his large and lofty views have become articulate on the tongue of all true liberals in every church. He preaches in more Orthodox pulpits to-day, probably, than in Unitarian and Universalist combined. Any one who knows the Channing grand march will find preachers all over the country keeping step to that inspiring air. Universalist preachers learned the strain earlier and have shown a prompter sympathy with it, perhaps, than any others outside Channing's own denominational ranks. He would be a rash man who should undertake to measure the sum of influence exerted on any church from any source. All of us have felt and responded to many potent persuasions in the wonderful period since Channing was carried to his grave. But there can be no manner of doubt with any well informed Universalist, that his denomination has been largely indebted for its improved literary taste and graces, for its growing disposition to identify the improvement of mankind with their salvation, and for its enriched moral life, to the influence of which Dr. Channing has been the chief source.

Some incidental effects of the influence which may be referred, in a large way, to Channing, have been looked upon by many Universalists as of doubtful value. Channing had, along with great breadth of vision and catholicity of temper, an almost morbid dread of the repressing power of pledges and organizations. He felt that ecclesiastical authority is so liable to be made a means of oppression that the only safe position for an independent and progressive man is an attitude of perpetual protest. Liberty was with him the first condition of religious life. It has seemed to many careful observers that Channing's idiosyncrasy has become a chronic *disorder* in the Unitarian body; and the same persons have not been moved to special expressions of gratitude for that measure of the individualizing and independent spirit which has been imbibed by Universalists. Others have taken a different and happier view. The sect-spirit, they think, had an unusual native development among Universalists, and one quite incongruous with the free type of their theology. And they esteem it a mark of the favor of Providence that He turned so large a current of liberal tendency into the conservative stream of our denominational life. Both parties have long since ceased to have any anxiety lest the providential mission of the Universalist Church shall be defeated, either because of original depravity or acquired infirmities.

Another of the effects alluded to is the bias which Universalist preachers have received from the Channing influence towards a literary and essay-like style of sermonizing. Opinions will vary on this point. But I have no hesitancy in affirming that while for the permanent influence of a really great thinker and reformer, like Dr. Channing, the thought demands a classic setting, for the widest and best effect of ordinary sermonizing, a different, more simple, direct and free style is required. It would be a hasty inference, however, that actual damage had accrued from this source. On the contrary, it may be alleged with reason that the early habit of "rude speech" needed the rectifying influence of a high literary model. And such, without doubt, Channing became to a considerable fraction of the preachers of the Universalist body. In some instances the force of a great example carried the admirer beyond the safe limit; but when losses and gains are balanced against each other, it scarcely admits of question that something remains to the credit of the latter.

It costs nothing to make acknowledgment of the debt of Universalism to Channing. Rather it is a satisfaction to have the opportunity to confess with joy that the great and luminous soul, who shed such a beneficent light on the dark problems of American Christianity and American civilization, dispensed no small measure of the healing that was in his beams on the course of that coeval and co-operative movement, which, in the providence of God, must share the honor and divide the reproach of undermining Orthodoxy and inventing Liberal Christianity.

CHANNING'S INFLUENCE ABROAD.

BY E. E. HALE.

It is a pity to have to confess it, but it is probably true that Channing's name is more generally known or cited among people who read in Europe, than it is in America. They do not draw the lines of sect there so closely as we do. With us all the machinery of the Roman Catholic Church, of the great Presbyterian body, of the Episcopalians, indeed the machinery of all the sects, would be used to hinder the reading of Channing. To see a volume of Channing on the table is here *prima facie* evidence of dissent from these great bodies. But, in Europe, both on the Continent and in England, his name was very early known among students of social order, as well as among those engaged in specially theological studies. His books, therefore, are to be found in all circles, and an interest in him is by no means confined to persons interested in religious discussions.

His first tour in Europe was made as early as 1822, and even then his reputation had gone before him. Coleridge wrote of him in that year,—"He has the love of wisdom and the wisdom of love." In his second visit, in 1833, he made the personal acquaintance of many of the scholars and reformers, who were doing their best to elevate the condition of the people. It is clear enough that the mere details of our American methods, whether in schools, in poor-relief, or in the prevention of poverty, would be of no great use for application under the conditions of European life. But such statements of the eternal principles, as Channing made, whether in appeal or in justification of the work which so interested him here, were precisely adapted for circulation in the various states of the Continent, where effort was in progress either for education or for more practical charity. It would be difficult to say how early separate tracts of his were translated into French or German. It would be fair to say, as a single illustration, that Baron Degerando, the administrative reformer, was as much interested in Channing as Channing was interested in him,—and the interest which Channing took in the German schemes of education was met by the cordiality with which distinguished German educators read and translated his writings.

In the work of such leaven in minds which were eventually to direct Europe, it has happened that Channing's works, or some of them, have been translated into all the European languages, even into the dialect of Iceland. The selection sometimes seems to us accidental. You cannot tell what you shall find, and you can hardly tell why you will find it. In Russia, as I was told twenty years ago, Channing was read in English, French, German or Russian among the most cultivated people. Many of his essays were early translated separately into German, and in 1850 and 1851 a more complete selection of his works was translated by Sydow and Schutze and published in Berlin. In the next year Laboulaye published in Paris "*Oeuvies sociales de W. E. Channing, precedes d'une introduction,*" and this collection was widely reviewed and read. Since then two French "Lives" have appeared. "The name of the American pastor is henceforth known and almost popular," Charles de Remusat could write in 1873 in the preface to the third edition of "Channing, sa Vie et ses Oeuvres." The other work, "Channing, sa Vie et sa Doctrine," (1876), was crowned by the French Academy of Moral and Political Sciences. From Sweden comes the word that Channing's works are winning more and more influence. In Italy it is said that his birthday will be celebrated by public meetings in Florence, Rome and Naples. Our Unitarian friends in Hungary found, very early, that some of Channing's works were just what they wanted, and began the translation of some of them for circulation in their own country. In this work they were afterward assisted by the American Unitarian Association, under the direction, almost compulsory, of Charles Lowe. It is a little curious to read in the Hungarian letters such a passage as this: "The writings of Dr. Channing and our English brethren excited a very great interest in every denomination, and especially among the *Calvinist* ministers." This statement precisely illustrates what we have said of the non-sectarian range of his influence on the other side of the ocean. When I was in Pesth in 1873 I expressed some surprise that the Hungarian Unitarians found writings of his which had been written for special occasions here, to be of sufficient interest for circulation in their very different conditions. To which they made this reply, very eagerly: "We are where you were fifty years ago. We are, for instance, organizing our schools on a better basis; we are persuading people to think for themselves and to read for themselves. What Channing wrote for you fifty years ago exactly meets our condition of to-day." And they instanced his address on "Self Culture," which was then nearly forty years old, as precisely adapted to their present necessity. I remember that I found long extracts from Channing's addresses copied into the local newspapers of Hungary, from the authorized translations made by our brethren at Kolosvar.

Of Channing's influence in England it is hardly necessary to speak. The interest with which Sydney Smith spoke of him in his letters will be remembered, and there is a story which is, I suppose, true, of Sydney Smith repeating one of his sermons in St. Paul's Cathedral, with public announcement of its origin. A collection of his sermons and essays was printed in London as early as 1828. The date is interesting because the first published collection in Boston was made only in 1830, brought together, if I recollect rightly, for sale at a fair in which he was interested. Scotland and Ireland have each had its separate edition. Our English friends long since published a cheap edition of his works in one volume, at a cost of about one dollar. "To avoid risk in his undertaking the publisher invited a subscription for ten thousand copies. This was considered a high number and a bold proposal. But the event far more than justified the proposal. Ten thousand copies were soon subscribed for, and then the number of twenty thousand was reached;

and then, to the surprise of the bold publishers, the number rose higher and higher, until, if newspapers are to be believed, it went to fifty thousand and beyond." The general circulation which this has already given them in England is probably larger than any they have received in America. And now, to mark the Centenary, they have a shilling edition under way, of which the circulation of a hundred thousand copies is expected. Readers far away as India are waiting for the book, for both the Brahmo book-rooms in Calcutta are advertising Channing's works.

But it "goes without saying" that Channing's influence is vastly larger than anything, which is represented by a catalogue of editions of his publications. It is an influence affecting people who have never heard his name. I believe I may speak of the interest with which Dean Stanley, on his visit here, looked for his monument in Mount Auburn. He asked me who wrote his epitaph, and expressed his interest, not to say surprise, that while that epitaph speaks of the regard in which Channing is held by Christians all over the world, it made no reference to his position as a leader of Unitarian thought. But this is easily accounted for. It is as it should be. Channing was no "come-outer," he was no "protestant" in the sense of one who is attempting to defy and alienate others. He was a leader of the religious life of his country in his time, far in advance of that life, as a leader should be. He was in the "Established Church" of New England, that church which from Elder Brewster's time down has made New England what iti s, given it its courage, its foresight, its hope and its victories. In such a community as that,—it is Roman Catholics, Episcopalians and Presbyterians who are the Dissenters, not such men as Channing. And, precisely as no one would think of writing in Dr. Stanley's epitaph, "This man was an Episcopalian," or in Pius the Ninth's, "This man was a Roman Catholic," no man wrote over Channing's tomb, "This man was a Unitarian." At bottom, however, that is well enough expressed to any one who knows that he stands for the simplest religious statement of the four gospels, for the immanent presence of God in man, and for the most unfettered religious thought of his own time.

The epitaph alluded to was written by Mr. George Ticknor. It is in these words:

"In memory of William Ellery Channing, honored throughout Christendom for his eloquence and courage in maintaining and advancing the great cause of Truth, Religion and Human Freedom, this monument is gratefully and reverently erected by the Christian Society, of which, during nearly forty years, he was the Pastor."

CHANNING IN HISTORY.

BY FREDERIC H. HEDGE.

(Extract from an Address Delivered in 1867.)

Channing differed from the rest of us, not so much in severity of practice, as in spirituality of mind. In that, he had no equal among all the men whom I have known. And that I conceive to be the characteristic thing in him,—Spirituality: living in the contemplation and pursuit of the highest; the habit of viewing all things in reference to the supreme good. All questions, movements, institutions, enterprises, all discoveries and inventions, he judged by this standard. Their spiritual bearing was the measure of the interest he felt in them. Even matters of science—and he loved to read and hear of science—interested him only as they served to illustrate the goodness of God, or as he saw in them an opening into a better life for man. His intellectual orbit had two foci, around which it forever revolved,—the goodness of God and the dignity of man. How to make the true nature of God believed against the distortions of a false theology; how make men conscious of their divine image and calling, and anxious to realize it,—this was one perpetual quest of that steady-burning, never-flaring, always-flaming, adoring spirit. In this spirituality lay the secret of his strength, and especially of that overwhelming personality which pervades all his speech, so that you can nowhere separate between the word and the man. By virtue of this, he spoke to us, and we listened to him as one having authority. And curious it was how this man—without learning, without reasearch, not a scholar, not a critic, without imagination or fancy, not a poet, not a word-painter, without humor or wit, without profundity of thought, without grace of elocution—could, from the spiritual height on which he stood, by mere dint of gravity (coming from such an elevation), send his word into the soul with more searching force than all the orators of his time.

I said, by mere dint of gravity; but his speech had another quality, which made it effective. That was a singular perspicuity, the result of a rare combination of calm and intense. Nothing is so eloquent, addressed to the intellect, as luminous statement; nothing addressed to the sentiments so eloquent as intense conviction. Channing had both, by reason of that singleness of mind which begets both. When the thought, which is the eye, is single, the whole speech, which is the body, is full of light. In conversing with the writings of Channing, we move in a world of exceeding day. There are no dark corners in his thought, no cloud-shadows on his discourse, no *chiaroscuro*, no twilight mysteries; it is all clear sky, and broad, effulgent noon,—owing in part, it must be confessed, to the singular want, in so distinguished an intellect, of all speculative proclivity, and, consequently, of all metaphysical scruples. He saw no difficulties, or none of the deeper difficulties, which perplex metaphysical minds. The imaginary objections which he considers, the imaginary opponents against whom he argues in his essays, are all of the most superficial kind. His lofty Theism, which lies at the basis of all his teaching, was assumed apparently without question. His Christology, his doctrine of Christ, so edifying on the moral side, is loose on the critical. A scientific theologian he certainly was not; not a profound thinker; but, what is vastly more important, a very clear thinker

and a wonderfully luminous writer. The critic and metaphysician may be disappointed in his writings; but they find an unfailing response and abundant justification in the common sense of mankind.

Side by side with the spirituality so characteristic of Channing, I place his scarcely less characteristic honesty. The action of this quality in private made conversation with him, to a young man especially, somewhat embarrassing. You missed those smooth insincerities which hide or soften milder disagreements and facilitate colloquial intercourse. You made your statement: if he accepted it, it was well; he was sure to furnish, from the riches of his mental experience, some apt comment, illustration, or application. If he rejected it, it was equally well; there was then opportunity and scope for friendly debate. But the chances were that he would neither accept nor reject, but receive it with dumb gravity, turning upon you that calm, clear eye, and annoying you with an awkward sense of frustration, as when one offers to shake hands, and no hand is given in return. But, as speaker and writer, this honesty established for Channing a peculiar claim, through the confidence it inspired, that the unadulterated sense of the man was in his speech. He might not see very far in some directions; but he saw with unclouded eye, and reported only what he saw. His judgement took no bribes. That is what can be said of very few of the writers or speakers of our time, I fear or of any time. In theology, at least, I know very few whose judgment does not seem to be vitiated, corrupted, by one or another influence, from within or from without, by position or passion. Some are warped by sectarian views, some by worldly interests, some by fear of public opinion or of loosening the bands of authority; and a great many more by lust of distinction, by jealousy of ecclesiastical domination, by impatience of traditional beliefs which they want the power to comprehend. Conservatives are bribed by the love of stability; radicals are bribed by the lure of novelty and the charm of defiance. Channing was unbribable. He had no interest to serve, aside of the truth; no crochet of the brain to pamper or defend. He was neither conservative nor radical, but a simple child of the light, bringing to the truth no prism, but a mirror; and giving back, without color or shade, the illumination he received. This honesty declares itself in his style. What a remarkable style it was! No purer English has been written in our day. So colorless, and yet so impressive, so natural, yet so exact. He never courted attention by the turn of a sentence or a trick of words; he used no flavors; he practiced no distortions to make truisms pass for more than they were worth. If his thought was commonplace, he said it in a commonplace way. He never tried to disguise it by a pert and perky way of putting it, by smart phraseology, or inverted syntax: if his thought was weighty, its simple weight sufficed, and a perfectly colorless style sufficed for its presentation. He never aims to be smart, he never aims to be quaint, but just walks through his pages with a sober, steady, dignified gait, and never capers and never struts.

His faith in humanity was another characteristic trait. He cherished an immense hope for the race. He believed in liberty; he glowed for it; if need were, I think he would have died for it.

What, now, is the present, and what is to be the final significance of Channing? In the world of letters, in the world of scientific theology, not so great as that of many of his contemporaries: in the world of ideas and ideal characters, a most weighty name and a sempiternal power. Of all the men of modern time, he stands for spiritual freedom. Although not an iconoclast, not a denier, but eminently an affirmative spirit, he represents the emancipation of the mind from all unrighteous thrall. His theology was never popular, and I suppose it never will be. What Renan says of it is probably true: "It demands too great intellectual sacrifices for the critic, and too little for those with whom it is a necessity to believe." But the final judgment of posterity will know how to separate between the creed and the man, as it does in the case of St. Augustine and Fenelon. The creed is costume, th spirit is the man. No man by accident wins enduring fame. Circumstances, popular illusion, may confer a transient and local repute; but the heroes who outlive the applause of their day, the heroes whom posterity accepts, whom the wise of other lands install in their Valhalla, have a right to their pedestals. Hear the judgment of one of the most learned, acute, and Christian scholars of this century, concerning Channing, pronounced many years after his death. The late Baron Bunsen, in a work entitled "God in History," selects from the Protestant Church five worthies, who stand preeminent, in his judgment, as representatives of the Divine presence in man,—Luther, Calvin, Jacob Boehme, Schleiermacher, Channing. And this is what he says of Channing: "In humanity a Greek, in citizenship a Roman, in Christianity an apostle." —"If such a man, whose way of life, in the face of his fellow-citizens, corresponded to the Christian earnestness of his words, and presents a blameless record—if such a one is not a Christian apostle of the presence of God in man, I know of none."

Channing's beautiful spirit, the product of generations of Puritan culture, stands in the past like a star.—*Joseph Cook.*

Channing, that good man, who, all his life consumed by one sentiment and one idea, sought truth and justice with all the forces of his intellect, and loved God and man with all the strength of his heart.—*Laboulaye.*

I feel as if it were insulting the memory of my uncle to refer, even, to the assertion that on his death-bed he changed his opinions. But the urgency of many correspondents induces me here to say, once for all, that there was no foundation whatever for such a rumor. Weakness, the violence of fever, and the earnest desire for his restoration, prevented conversation on his part and ours; but every word, act, look, showed us how perfect was his peace. Every word that he is known to have spoken, indicating his own religious opinions and feelings, is recorded on the preceding pages. This distinct statement should forever put an end to the calumny referred to, among all honest men.—*William Henry Channing—A note from Channing's Memoirs.*

AN ORTHODOX CRITICISM OF CHANNING.

BY PROF. GEO. P. FISHER,

Professor of Ecclesiastical History in Yale Colle .

[*Extracts from an article in the International Review for July, 1879.*]

One influence that tended to precipitate a conflict between the two sections of the New England Church, was the spread in eastern New England of the Hopkinsian theology, one of the later fruits of the theological activity of Jonathan Edwards. This, in some of its features,—as, for example, in its doctrine of a general in opposition to a limited Atonement,—was a mitigated form of Calvinism, and was so characterized by Channing himself. But the cardinal peculiarity of the Calvinistic system,—the idea of divine sovereignty,—it presented in extreme forms of statement, with no attempt to qualify it by clothing it in mystery, by connecting it with any supposed counter truth, or by cloaking it under conciliatory phrases. * * The Hopkinsians, to be sure, made the will the seat of moral evil, but they did not distinguish with any steadiness between voluntary and involuntary inclinations, between choice and constitutional sensibility; and, worse still, they referred the beginning of sin in each individual of the race to a sovereign decree, and did not scruple to ascribe it to a creative act, or, as they termed it, to divine efficiency. Such was their usual phraseology, that it was hard for those who heard it to find any firm ground of human responsibility for character thus originated. The rest of the New England Calvinists, on the other hand, made sin a physical inheritance, a taint or contamination, which is entailed like the color of the eyes, or, rather, like a disease of the lungs. In this abject condition was Orthodox theology, in this branch of it, when the Unitarian polemics opened their guns upon it. * * * *

Coupled with these extravagant Hopkinsian views was naturally connected the idea of "submission to God" as the first and supreme act of human duty, preceding faith in the Redeemer; and this submission, it was held, must take the form of a willingness to be cast off forever, if the glory of God should require it. Perhaps for the first time in the history of the Church, it was made by Christian pastors a necessary condition of being saved that one should be "willing to be damned." There can be no doubt that the exaggeration of Calvinism in the direction of divine power and sovereignty, the sharp, relentless formulating of these obnoxious dogmas, and the obtrusion of them in season and out of season, had something to do in provoking the doctrinal reaction and revolt, although the main cause was deeper and of a more general nature.

(1.) On the other hand, the *dignity of human nature* was a fundamental article in Channing's creed. In every human being there is the germ of an unbounded progress. An unspeakable value belongs to him. His nature is not to be vilified. A wrong done to him is like violence offered to an angel.

This idea of the dignity of man is a great Christian truth. No one can doubt that it was a living conviction in Channing's mind. It imparted to him that "enthusiasm of humanity" which became the passion of his soul. He avowed himself an opponent of what may properly enough be termed the catholic theology. He openly, though without the least arrogance, claims the character of an innovator and a dissentient. It is not amiss, therefore, to attempt to account for his rejection of the general creed. What has the catholic theology to say in justification of itself?

It has to say simply that Channing had a view,—that is, an adequate, penetrating view,—of only one side of the truth. Not but that he had a mournful perception of the evils wrought by sin in defacing God's image in man, and in inflicting misery upon individuals and communities. Not that he was incapable of moral indignation in view of atrocities done by man against his neighbor. But the catholic theology, if I may venture to interpret its verdict, does not find in him and in his teaching, as a whole, that discernment of the *guilt* of sin, of that particular quality of evil-doing, which may blanch the cheek and strike terror to the heart of even the prosperous criminal. The catholic theology, once more, fails to discover in Channing a sufficiently strong grasp of sin as a principle, revealing itself in multiform expressions or phenomena, entering into numberless phases of manifestation, exercising sway in mankind, and holding fast the will in a kind of bondage. The diversified forms of selfish and unrighteous action are not habitually traced back by him to the *fons et origo malorum*,—the mysterious alienation of men from the fellowship of God. The moral malady is not explored to its sources; and hence the tendency is to treat it with palliatives. It is too much inclined to rely on education to do the work of regeneration. The forces requisite for the redemption of the captive from servitude are underrated: as John Randolph said of Watts and Beattie, given him as an antidote to Hume, "Milk-and-water for the bite of a rattlesnake!" This tendency was not fully carried out by Channing. He belongs to a transition. But he shows plainly the drift of the stream; and he speaks of customary accusations of sin brought against mankind as exaggerated. If this is not the right clew to the explanation of Channing's dissent, we know not where to look for it.

In other words,—not applying the term in any offensive meaning,—Channing was a Sentimentalist, captivated by an ideal. He had never experienced in himself any flagrant outbreaking of sin; he had never wrestled in mortal agony with any sensual propensity. Nor did his associations in life bring him very much in contact with gross manifestations of wickedness. He saw what man might be, what man ought to be; but he did not thoroughly see what man really is.

It may be added to these remarks that the catholic theology does not degrade human nature, but exalts it, by the emphasis which it lays on guilt. It is only an exalted being that can make himself an object of moral indignation to the infinite Creator. The consciousness of guilt forbids man to think lightly of himself, to conceive of himself as beneath the notice of God, or to count upon the indulgence to which feeble and imperfect orders of being may reasonably lay claim. Sin, when we seek to comprehend its inception and spread through mankind, is enveloped in mystery; but, as Coleridge has said, it is the one mystery which makes all things else clear.

(2.) The next of the leading ideas of Channing was that of the Fatherhood of God. Against the Calvinistic assertion of the sovereignty of God, he was never tired of proclaiming God's paternal character. In the Scriptures, God is spoken of as a King, and is denominated a Father. That there is an administration of the world by moral laws, and that these laws are enforced by penal sanctions, is a matter of experience as well as of revelation. In other words, there is a moral government over mankind. How are we to conceive the deepest, the essential, relation of God to human beings whom he has created in his image? Is it best typified by the rela-

tion of a parent to his children? He is the Father of our spirits. Channing meant and professed to follow the Scriptures; but he would have followed them more strictly if he had dwelt less on the paternal relation of God to mankind in their present state, and had insisted more on the fact that a relation which is practically subverted by their disloyalty can be restored only by their return to filial allegiance. We are commanded in the New Testament to behold the goodness *and* the severity of God. The severe side, the side of judgment and penalty, which is adapted to produce fear, had been held up to view, sometimes disproportionately. Both Edwards and Hopkins had stated in the baldest language that the righteous in heaven would derive satisfaction from contemplating the torments of the lost. This conclusion they supposed to follow by an irresistible logic from the justice of the appointed penalty,—as if a due sympathy with the righteous administration of law required that we shall attend and enjoy public executions. In the powerful reaction against representations of this character, against the corresponding portraiture of God, against sensuous pictures of retributive torment, and the predominant appeals to fear, the Unitarians tended towards the other extreme of emasculating religion by divesting it of those elements which awaken dread in the guilty,—elements which are just as prominently set forth in the Bible as are the paternal feelings of God, and can never safely be left out of the teaching of Christianity. Channing, when he was a boy, not only never killed a bird, and avoided crushing an insect, but he let rats out of a trap to save them from being drowned.

(3.) To bring men back to God as penitent children is recognized also by the catholic theology as the end of the gospel. But how? *Through the Son.* The sonship of Christ is the power and the pattern of sonship in those who have fallen away from God. In the church doctrine, fatherhood is an eternal characteristic of God. It does not begin to be with the human race, or with redemption. The Son is sent to bring back in himself the fallen race. His sonship is eternal; the mode of his derivation and dependence elevates him above the rank of a creature. But he is sent; and his coming is thus the highest conceivable evidence of the love of God to mankind, and of his pity towards them, and of self-sacrifice on the part of him who voluntarily becomes a partaker of human nature with all its burdens and exposures. It is in the fellowship of the Son,—according to St. John and St. Paul,—that we attain to the realization of the filial relation to God. But what was Channing's conception of Christ? According to Channing, Christ was a pre-existent rational creature, an angel or spirit of some sort, who had entered into a human body. He was not even a man except so far as his corporeal part is concerned, but was a creature from some upper sphere. Now we can see some plausibility in the theory that Christ was merely a man; was human just as Moses and Paul were human; and that this is a complete account of his person,—although we believe this theory to be unscriptural and untrue. But one must be excused for saying,—and this is said without the least polemical acrimony,—that the particular conception which Channing set up, in the room of the Church doctrine of the Incarnation, is one of the crudest notions which the history of speculation on this subject has ever presented. The transitional character of Channing's type of theology is strikingly indicated in this indefinite, unphilosophical sort of Arianism, to which it would seem that he adhered to the end.

Here, again, we are obliged to trace error in part to the particular conception of the Trinity which had come to prevail in New England. What Professor Stuart defended against Channing, though with vigor and learning, was the notion of three distinctions to which personal pronouns can be applied,—a mode of defining the Trinity which the Nicene Fathers who framed the Orthodox creed would have regarded with some astonishment. The eternal fatherhood of God, the precedence of the Father, is as much a part of the Orthodox doctrine of the Trinity as is the divlnity of the Son.

(4.) What, according to Channing, is the purpose of the mission of Christ? What work does he perform? Here he agrees with the Church in the general proposition that he came to deliver men from sin and its consequences. The accepted doctrine, and what has always been considered the doctrine of the Scriptures, is that an expiatory effect is accomplished by Christ; that although he reveals the Father's love, and is sent by the Father out of compassion to the sinful race, there is yet in the conscience of God a demand to which the consciences of men respond, for something of the nature of compensation in the moral order violated by sin; that this compensation being made, the foundation is laid for a forgiveness which brings honor to the divine character on all sides, and is consistent with a righteous moral administration. Thus a new relation is established between God and men,—a reconciliation. Now Channing did not absolutely renounce the Orthodox opinion. Having referred to the opposite view, he says: "Many of us are dissatisfied with this explanation, and think that the Scriptures ascribe the remission of sins to Christ's death, with an emphasis so peculiar that we ought to consider this event as having a special influence in removing punishment, though the Scriptures may not reveal the way in which it contributes to this end." But, in keeping with his transitional position, he lays no stress on this truth. On the contrary, he is unsparing, though never intentionally unfair or extravagant, in his denunciation of the current expressions in which it is set forth. Either from a want of familiarity with the history of doctrine, or from not being addicted to patient intellectual analysis, he is content with giving expression to his revolted feeling. He does not stop to inquire whether a profound truth may not be contained in a statement which, if literally taken, is obnoxious. He sticks in the phraseology. Nor does he attempt to separate a particular representation of some school in theology from the deep, underlying truth which theology, with varying degrees of success, has been endeavoring to formulate. There is a contrast between the clearness, and evident honesty of purpose, with which he describes the position of his adversaries, and the inability profoundly to appreciate that position. Propositions, the terms of which are capable of more than one interpretation (as that the atonement appeases God), are taken in one sense,—an admissible sense, indeed, if the words only are considered; but yet not the sense which these words suggest to the minds of those who utter them,—and then a variety of inferences are deduced, repugnant to sound Christian feeling and to a portion of the teaching of Scripture.

Apart from his criticism of adverse views, Channing's positive idea is that Christ does his work of reclaiming men from sin by teaching truth, which is recommended by his spotless character and by his death, and confirmed as having authority by his miracles, especially his resurrection from the dead. Of the teaching of Christ, especially of his ethical teaching, and of the unapproachable beauty and perfection of his character, it is well known that Channing has written much that is ad-

mirable. When we inquire specifically what the capital points of that doctrine are which Christ was sent into the world to announce, we find them to be the doctrine of God the Father, and of the immortality of the soul. This last truth is brought home to men's belief by the resurrection of Jesus. These two truths are singled out by Channing, in writing on Christian Evidences, as most important points of the Saviour's teaching. The paternal character of God is declared and evinced, and thereby superstitions and gloomy fears growing out of them are dispelled; and the soul's destiny to survive death is vividly exhibited, and is also proved, by the raising of Jesus from the dead. The Christian revelation is reduced in its contents substantially to these two articles of faith.

We are concerned, on the other hand, with the view taken of Parker's position by Channing. He naturally leaned strongly to an intuitional philosophy. He had made much of the moral and spiritual faculties of man, and of the spontaneous response which the contents of the Gospel call forth from human nature. There were not wanting, then, affinities to draw him towards the new school of Liberals. He was deeply attached to historical Christianity, however. His biography contains a number of memorable and beautiful letters in which he expresses himself respecting Parkerism temperately but frankly. In their whole tone they manifest in the most attractive way the loveliness of his Christian spirit. He felt that a rejection of the miracles was a rejection of Christ. The miracles, he says, are so interwoven with his history, that, if they are torn away, nothing is left; that history is turned into fable; the historical Christ is gone. But why not let him go? First, the soul craves not only the *idea*, but the *existence*, of perfection. Christian truth without Christ and his character loses a great portion of its quickening power. The miracles are among the manifestations of Christ's character; they are symbolical of his spiritual influence,—for these reasons they cannot be spared. The miracles are credible. God could not approach a darkened, sensual world by mere abstract teaching. The inward perfection of Christ is itself a miracle, which renders the outward acts of superhuman power easy of belief. Channing recoils from Pantheism, which he sees to be latent in the mind of the new school of "true spiritualists." "I see and feel the harm done by this crude speculation, while I also see much nobleness to bind me to its advocates. In its opinions generally I see nothing to give me hope. . . . The immense distance of us all from Christ." in character is a fact so obvious that not to recognize it implies such a degree of self-ignorance, and of ignorance of human history, "that one wonders how it can have entered a sound mind." In these letters there is no unseemly denunciation, but there is genuine, manly sorrow at the promulgation of opinions that are regarded as undermining historical Christianity. Had Channing gone a step further, and distinctly perceived the necessity of a present, abiding relation of the soul to the living Christ, he would naturally have advanced to a view of his person not dissonant in substance from that of the catholic theology, and would have perceived at the same time how indispensable to Christian piety is the assumption of the reality of the Gospel history. He cannot desert the old anchorage, but his reasons for not doing so are less convincing than if he could have pointed out plainly how a shipwreck is the necessary and immediate consequence. Christ was really, if not theoretically, more to him than a teacher and an example.

On the whole, while Channing cannot be said to have had a very deep comprehension of the evangelical creed, or to have contributed to the advancement of scientific theology, those who reject his theological opinions may be glad to see him—to quote the language of his epitaph—"honored throughout Christendom for his eloquence and courage in maintaining and advancing the great cause of truth, religion, and human freedom."

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES OF DR. CHANNING.

I.

BY MISS ELIZABETH P. PEABODY,

[Miss Peabody was on terms of close intimacy with Dr. Channing's family. "Between 1826 and 1832," she tells us, "I was in the habit of spending my evenings at Dr. Channing's, whenever he was in his city home "From her recollections and journal notes of conversations with him, she has just prepared a volume, whose earlier chapters appeared three or four years ago in the *Unitarian Review*. From their pages we extract a few "Reminiscences."—W. C. G.]

A Childs Impression of Channing.

I was a child about nine years old, perhaps not so old, living in old Salem, where my parents attended the Second Church. And I remember one Sunday morning when some ladies appeared at our door, while the bells were ringing, requesting leave to sit in our pew, "Because Mr. Channing was to preach." My mother had intended to stay at home that day with the children, whom she never left with hirelings, but sometimes with me as unconscious watcher; but immediately she said she "must go and take Elizabeth,' "because," as I heard her explain to my father, "it takes genius to reach children."

Our own minister, Dr. Thomas Barnard, wore, even in the week-days, a black gown and cocked hat, as was the old fashion, only then just passing away. I was, therefore, the more surprised when I saw a small man, with a rapid, nervous motion, dressed in a traveller's great coat, go into the pulpit, and without sitting down (for he was a little belated), take up the hymn-book, turn its leaves quickly, and enter the desk; then slowly lifting up his large, remarkable eyes, with the expression of seeing something, began to read a devotional hymn, with which the service always commenced; that is, it always began with a hymn, and Dr. Channing never read any but the devotional hymns in a Sunday service.

My attention was fixed by that look, which I became familiar with in later years, and always associated with t one recorded of the martyr Stephen, and which was now i mediately repeated; for as soon as the hymn was sung, arose again, with the same expression, and uttered in a cor sponding voice, as he closed his eyes, the words, "*From* everlasting *to* everlasting, Thou art God OUR FATHER." I was thrilled as never before by the thought of a man's communing with God, face to face; and years after when I heard him read those words of the Palmist, laying the same emphasis on the prepositions, I recognized how it had given me a sense of the Eternal.

The Boy and the Revivalist.

He asked me once a good deal about my own childish emotions and thoughts, and told experiences of his own. He said that he did not, like most men, look back with joy and longing to his childhood; it was a painful season to him. The boys at Mr. Roger's school were cruel, tormenting brutes, and rough to each other. The system of school discipline was harsh; a great deal of corporal punishment was used,

etc.; and he was in great perplexity of mind about people, only relieved by his love of Nature's beauty. He liked to be alone in the open air; was very fond of the beach and every aspect of the ocean; and as he first conceived of God as the Maker of the world, his conception of him was sublime and beautiful. His favorite reading in the Bible was the Psalms of Praise, and the Song of the Three Children, etc. But for these early impressions of the God of Nature, he said he should have been peculiarly unfortunate, for he was brought up under the preaching of the celebrated Dr. Hopkins, the originator of that special phase of Calvinism which makes it a condition of salvation to accept with joyfulness the fact that we deserve everlasting punishment.

"When I was quite young," he said, "I heard a sermon from an itinerant preacher, which roused in me a doubt of human veracity, that in the end operated as a guard of my obedience to the first commandment on which hang the law and the prophets, but not *to the second.* When a small boy I was taken by my father, in a chaise, to a meeting, to which he went to hear a famous preacher of the revival kind. The preacher made such a terrific picture of the lost condition of the human race rushing into hell, and of hell and the strength of the devil in his efforts to snatch from God the creatures he had made, that it filled my imagination with horror. It must have been done with some artistic skill, I think, for it vanquished the preacher's own imagination, so that in very moving tones he besought his hearers to flee from the wrath to come, into the arms of Jesus, who was described as wounded and bleeding at the hands of the inexorable God, who exacted from him the uttermost penalty due to a world of sinners."

Supposing in his childish simplicity that this terrible state of things was just discovered, he expected his father would say something to him on their ride home about "fleeing from the wrath to come," which was the never-to-be-forgotten burden of the sermon. But he did not. On the contrary, to his astonishment, after riding a little way, he began to whistle! And on arriving at home, when his mother asked him if he had been disappointed in the preacher, he replied: "No; he is a strong man."

They sat down to supper, and it was eaten as if nothing extraordinary had transpired. After supper his father took his pipe and a newspaper, and sat down before the fire, putting his feet upon the mantle-piece in his usual careless way. The child looked on with astonishment; but the relief to his mind as he decided on the spot that *it was all false*, was replaced with the strongest sense of indignation that his feelings had been so wantonly trifled with; and there followed a permanent or ever-recurring doubt as to the truth of human speech. From that time on he constantly neglected what people *said*, in the endeavor to divine, by their actions, what they really *meant*,—a habit of mind that had clung to him and only been surmounted in his later years, so far as to dissipate his early gloom.

A Dangerous Sermon.

On one occasion he had preached a sermon which challenged a variety of opinions in his congregation,—it may have been in defense and illustration of the doctrine that the glory of Christianity consists, *not in anything peculiar to itself* but in what it has in common with the teachings of reason and nature; its most important truths, *e. g.*, the being and unity of God, human immortality, and the presence and aid of the Divine spirit, being only clearer declarations of what had been whispered by these other teachers. I reported some of the remarks made about it to Dr. Channing; among other things telling him that —— —— said, "We cannot allow Dr. Channing to say such things."

"Ah," said he, "did —— —— say that? I think I must have said something worth while! If it excited any thought even antagonistic, it encourages me immeasurably more than an admiring acquiescence. I have no pleasure in gaining that. To hear that I have preached an eloquent sermon on a deeply important subject gives me no pleasure. Expressions of that sort discourage and pain me. If I had touched the depths of spiritual energy, they would not express admiration of my words. It is only what moves men's own thinking that arouses spiritual life, and causes progress. This sermon may be one worth printing!"

I answered immediately, "Let me have it to copy then, now."

He said, as he had done before, "You can do something with your time better than to copy."

I replied, "I can copy when I can do nothing else. It is so easy for me to copy, that I can do it while listening to an interesting book read aloud."

"I will test that at once," he exclaimed with animation, and immediately rose and gave me the sermon and some copying paper. Then taking up Cousin's translation of Plato he began to read into his beautiful English the *Timæus.*

This was indeed a severe test, for when he read to any one what interested him, he kept raising his large, devouring eyes, to see if it was taken in; and now he frequently stopped, to get my assent or dissent to the thoughts expressed; while in copying his difficult manuscript, I could not do it quite mechanically, as in ordinary cases, his abbreviations often needing my consideration of the context.

But he was satisfied, and said, "Well, you shall copy, when you are here, while I read to you."

And it was a fact, that while I was copying some fifty of his sermons, out of which he subsequently selected the volume of *Eleven Sermons*, he did translate to me several volumes of Cousin's Plato.

Channing in Society:—No. 1.

There was as little sentimentality as sanctimoniousness about him. It was a singular directness and transparency that harmonized with the candid simplicity of unconscious children, but often was oppressive to frivolous, commonplace, and conventional elders, who felt themselves solicited by his earnest intensity. "Dr. Channing asks you how you do," said a brilliant lady of society, "and when you say you are well, he replies, 'I am very glad,' as if it were of real importance to him; and when he says, 'It is a beautiful day,' you think of the morning of creation, when the sons of God shouted for joy!"

I remember to have abruptly entered his study one day when the "minister's meeting" was at his own house, and was struck with the unwonted air of embarrassment of Dr. Walker, and others, who told me afterwards the conversation there was always constrained. In his simplicity and earnestness, Dr. Channing wanted to turn it upon those great subjects which "would have benefited the case were Jesus himself bodily present to lead the conversation," as he rather impatiently added. This was the true explanation, and not any sanctimoniousness on Dr. Channing's part; for

never was any one more free from it; nor was it any ecclesiastical spirit, of which he had not a particle. But he had little health and strength, for company, and when he met those dedicated, like himself, to the vocation of Christian teacher, he wanted to use the precious time for the highest exchange of thought.

Channing in Society:—No. 2.

One anecdote that I then heard shows, strikingly, the personal tenderness of his charity. Among those visited by him were two old pauper women who became insane, the second catching the disease from the first. They were both harmless, and were impressed with the same fixed idea that they were to be poisoned, which made them distrust all the world except Dr. Channing and Mr. Phillips, one of the deacons of his church; and it was a fact that for several years they would only eat from the hands of these gentlemen,—so that one or the other visited them every day, Mr. Phillips, who never left Boston in the summer, supplying Dr. Channiug's place when he was in Rhode Island. I am sure that this is a fact, because I once heard Dr. Channing incidentally refer to it, and then asked him about it. He said they only took one meal a day, which seemed enough for their bodily health, and they died within a few days of each other.

The "Young Thinker."

Both now and always, Dr. Channing entirely refused to enter into controversy upon the pre-existence. Once some years after, I remember he said that this was merely a question of ontology in his eyes. "The humanitarians," said he, "believe Jesus was sinless in point of fact, and that separates him from the rest of mankind, more than mere pre-existence could. I do not deem it a question of importance, and may change my view with respect to it. I am aware that I have never put my mind upon it; and once I know that I passively received from tradition the dogma that Christ was the Creator of the world, including man; for one day when I was on a journey, I went into the church of a small country town, and was startled to hear a preacher upon our duty to love our Savior Jesus Christ, begin his sermon with the *dictum*, 'Because he is our Creator." It immediately struck me that if this was the relation, the Bible writers would have made a great deal of it; and by the time the preacher had finished his sermon, my mind had come to the negative. I have thought it gave dignity and interest to Christ's mission to believe that an inhabitant of heaven should come to earth to save men. But this may be a shadow of past errors. You young thinkers have the advantage of us in coming without superstitious preoccupation to the words of Scripture, and are more likely to get the obvious meaning. We shall walk in shadows to our graves."

At this time, however, he did not go into the subject, even so far; but said: "I do not think we gain any knowledge of God that is Spiritual, or makes us spiritual, by the abstracting faculty of the intellect; logic belongs to a lower region of our nature than the moral. Intellectual philosophy is not religion, which consists in loving and serving one another in the Lord; *i. e.*, because the Father wills that his children should, through this love and service, grow, and mutually be one another's happiness." „ In the poetry of Coleridge and Wordsworth," he continued, "I find a theology more spiritual than in the controversial writings of either Unitarians or Trinitarians."

II.

BY SAMUEL J. MAY.

[Extract from his "Recollections of the Anti-Slavery Conflict."]

Under Reproof.

Late in the year 1834, being on a visit in Boston, I spent several hours with Dr. Channing in earnest conversation upon Abolitionism and the Abolitionists. He acknowledged the inestimable importance of the object we had in view. The evils of Slavery he assented could not be overstated. He allowed that removal to Africa ought not to be made a condition of the liberation of the enslaved. But he hesitated still to accept the doctrine of immediate emancipation. His principal objections, however, were alleged against the severity of our denunciations, the harshness of our epithets, the vehemence, heat, and excitement caused by the harangues at our meetings, and still more by Mr. Garrison's *Liberator*. The Doctor dwelt upon these objections until I became impatient, and, forgetting for the moment my wonted deference, I broke out with not a little warmth of expression and manner:—

"Dr. Channing," I said, "I am tired of these complaints. The cause of suffering humanity, the cause of our oppressed, crushed colored countrymen, has called as loudly upon others as upon us Abolitionists. We Abolitionists are what we are, —babes, sucklings, obscure men, silly women, publicans, sinners, and we shall manage this matter just as might be expected of such persons as we are." "Dr. Channing," I continued with increased earnestness, "it is not *our fault* that those who might have pleaded for the enslaved so much more wisely and eloquently, both with the pen and the living voice than we can, have been silent. We are not to blame, sir, that you, who, more perhaps than any other man, might have so raised the voice of remonstrance that it should have been heard throughout the length and breadth of the land,—we are not to blame, sir, that you have not so spoken. And now that inferior men have been impelled to speak and act against what you acknowledge to be an awful system of iniquity, it is not becoming in you to complain of us because we do it in an inferior style. Why, sir, have you not taken this matter in hand yourself? Why have you not spoken to the nation long ago, as you, better than any other one, could have spoken?"

At this point I bethought me to whom I was administering this rebuke,—the man who stood among the highest of the great and good in our land,—the man whose reputation for wisdom and sancity had become world-wide,—the man, too, who had ever treated me with the kindness of a father, and whom, from my childhood, I had been accustomed to revere more than any one living. I was almost overwhelmed with a sense of my temerity. His countenance showed that he was much moved. I could not suppose he would receive all I had said very graciously. I awaited his reply in painful expectation. The minutes seemed very long that elapsed before the silence was broken. Then in a very subdued manner and in the kindliest of tones of his voice he said, "Brother May, I acknowledge the justice of your reproof. I have been silent too long." Never shall I forget his words, look, whole appearance. I then and there saw the beauty, the magnanimity, the humility of a truly great Christian soul. He was exalted in my esteem more even than before.

Early in December, 1835, Dr. Channing's volume on slavery issued from the press. As was to be expected, the appearance of the work caused a great sensation throughout the

land. It found its way into many parlors from which a copy of *The Liberator* would have been spurned. Most of the statesmen of our country read it, and many slaveholders. Although he disclaimed the Abolitionists; stated that he had never attended one of our meetings, nor heard one of our lecturers; although he made several grave objections to our doctrines and measures, and unwittingly gave his sanction to several of the most serious misrepresentations of our sentiments, our objects, and means of prosecuting them; yet he so utterly repudiated the right of any man to *property* in the person of any other man, and gave such a fearful *expose* of the sinfulness of holding slaves and the vices which infested the communities where human beings were held in such an unnatural condition, that the Southern aristocracy and their Northern partizans came soon to regard him as a more dangerous man than even Mr. Garrison.

III.

BY WM. H. FURNESS.

[Extracted mainly from his "Forty-eighth Anniversary" Sermon, 1873.]

In the Pulpit.

It is almost with a feeling of pain that I meet now with so few among my brothers in the ministry, and others, who have it to remember that they once heard Dr. Channing preach. They who enjoyed that privilege felt, as they listened, "as if they were following in the triumphal procession of truth." It is true his printed discourses are within reach of all, and they are diligently circulated. But admirable as his writings are, it was the voice, the living voice and presence of Dr. Channing that gave an indescribable power to his thought.

Let me recall now, if I may, his saintly memory from the misty past: I behold again that frail, slight figure, which it seemed as if the summer's breath might blow away, those soft eyes, suffused with emotion, that smile that struggled through an habitual expression of physical weakness. And that voice,—again I hear that wonderful voice, like no other, so flexible, like a strip of gold leaf quivering in the softest breadth, sensitive to the slightest emotion. When he stood in the pulpit and began to speak, and before he became interested, he appeared to have no control over it. It ran up and down, apparently at random, after the strangest sing-song fashion. But when the emotion came, it swelled out with a world of feeling, and thrilled one as if it issued from the inmost deep of the spirit. It was like some huge sail, flapping about before it takes the wind, but when it takes it, rounding out, grand, orb-like. The feeling which it then conveyed was profound, and the impression, it seemed to me, was as deep as mortal speech can make.

There is a passage in one of Dr. Channing's discourses, his discourse on immortality, in which he answers that objection to the idea of another life, which is founded on the fact that races only are perpetuated, and not individuals. His answer is this: It is true (I quote from memory) such is the case in the physical world. There, individuals are made little account of. They are sacrificed to perpetuate the race. There, it could not be otherwise. For, suppose a single tree to be allowed to grow and to keep growing without limit. It would draw all the nourishment out of the earth, and the water, and the air, to the destruction of all other trees, and there would be at last only this one tree. So is it in the material world. But not so is it in the world of mind. Suppose any one mind to grow without limit, to be ceaselessly enriched with ever new accessions of wisdom, and genius, and power, so far from excluding other minds and interfering with their growth, it would help and inspire all others. The passage is striking. But the reader looks in vain for the effect which it had upon those who heard it from Dr. Channing's lips. When the discourse of which it is a part was first delivered, half a century ago, in his own church in Boston, a highly-intelligent friend of mine who was present, told me that at the above passage the audience ceased to breathe, and they could be heard all over the church drawing breath, when, at the close of this statement, the preacher paused. Some few years afterward, Dr. Channing repeated the same discourse in the Unitarian Church in New York, and another person who was present described to me the effect almost in the same words. He said the audience held their breadth. Dr. Channing's reading of the Bible was better than any commentary. I can never forget, when he preached the first time in this church, crowded to these pulpit steps, his reading of one of the stanzas of a familiar hymn. So expressive of the profoundest awe were his tones that the audience seemed "turned into listening marble." One felt, at the moment, that, if the ceiling of the church had opened and a vision of the Ineffable had been accorded us, we could not have been more truly awe-struck. It was on the same occasion that he alluded, in his sermon, to "young men standing on the steps of a *hotel*." Such a depth of mingled pity and contempt opened in the utterance of that one word, hotel, that instantly that place seemed the most insignificant spot on the face of the earth; and yet, so full and large did the word sound, that if one had wished to write it so that it should look as large as it sounded, a whole side-wall of the church would hardly have afforded room enough.

Criticism.

His essay on Milton, which appeared in 1826, was, I believe, his first excursion beyond the range of topics religious and theological. That, and an article which appeared at the same time in the Edinburgh *Review*, by Macauley, on the same subject, created quite a sensation in our reading circles. I do not know which was talked about most. More than one notice of Dr. Channing's article appeared in the Edinburgh *Review*, then as still the king among reviews. The last notice was understood to be from the pen of Lord Brougham. It was unjust and depreciatory in its spirit. Some of Lord Brougham's criticisms of Dr. Channing struck me, however, at the time as just. And once, some time after, in conversation with Dr. Channing, I made bold to say so to him, invited always to speak freely by the love he bore to freedom of thought and speech. His reply impressed me only the more deeply with a sense of his exalted character. "Very likely; no doubt, indeed," he said, "Lord Brougham is right. When I wrote that essay I did not dream that it would command so much attention,—it is doubtless very faulty. I imagine Lord Brougham is right. I have never read his review of me." This utter indifference to what was said of his literary character abroad, and by so distinguished a person as Lord Brougham, was striking, especially when the extreme sensitiveness of our literary men to English opinion is considered, and to English opinion enunciated by so high an authority.

His Chief Service.

"Mr. Carlyle somewhere says that the writings of Dugald Stewart are an excellent introduction to the study of moral and intellectual philosophy. I have always thought that Dr. Channing's writings discharge a like introductory office to the

whole broad domain of religious thought. Much as he has done for our liberal form of faith, he has done far more, and it is a more enduring service, for perfect freedom of inquiry. His favorite theme, the dignity of human nature, the priceless sanctity of the human soul, rendered him incapable of imposing any restrictions upon the mind. In his Dudleian lecture, delivered long before the question was started by George Ripley as to the value of miracles as evidences of a revelation, Dr. Channing freely admits that *sincere* Christians may reject the miracles of the New Testament,—an admission I well remember, as the venerable Dr. Osgood, of Medford, a stout Calvinist, to be sure (my pastor there), wrote on the margin of a copy of the lecture, which I loaned him, against said admission, '*This I deny.*'

"When the question arose concerning the miracles (which, by the way, has had results), Dr. Channing offended near and valued friends by saying that no heresies disturbed him so much as the free and full discussion of doubts and difficulties interested him. He was a Free Religionist, and pre-eminently a Christian believer also. I remember his repeating to me, with no hint of dissent, a remark of Lucretia Mott, who had paid him a visit, her hope that the time may come when 'a good man' would be a higher title than 'a good Christian;' a hope in which we may all share, if the Christian name is not held to be as broad as humanity itself."

I hug to my heart such a Unitarian as that. * * * From him I have learned what is meant by a Christian Unitarian. —*Quillinan, a Roman Catholic.*

I have to-day heard of the death of Dr. Channing. He has fallen in the midst of his usefulness. His faculties grew brighter as age came on him. No man in America has left a sphere of such wide usefulness; no man since Washington has done so much to elevate his country. His life has been spent in the greatest and best of works. A great man—and a good man—has gone home from the earth.—*Thodore Parker's Journal, Oct. 5, 1842.*

Channing, however, was still the legitimate spiritual successor of Jonathan Edwards in affirming with new emphasis the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, that God is in direct communication with the souls of his creatures. The difference is that Edwards holds the doors of communication so nearly closed that only the elect can pass in; Channing throws them wide open, and invites everybody to be illumined in thought and vitalized in will by the ever fresh outpourings of celestial light and warmth. * * * He was the intellectual father of Theodore Parker, and the intellectual grandfather of Octavius B. Frothingham.—*E. P. Whipple.*

CHANNING.

1842.

The pages of thy book I read,
And as I closed each one,
My heart, responding, ever said,
"Servant of God! well done!"

Well done! thy words are great and bold;
At times they seem to me,
Like Luther's, in the days of old,
Half battles for the free!

—*H. W. Longfellow.*

CHANNING.

Not vainly did old poets tell,
Nor vainly did old genius paint,
God's great and crowning miracle,—
The hero and the saint.

For, even in a faithless day,
Can we our sainted ones discern;
And feel, while with them on the way,
Our hearts within us burn.

And thus the common tongue and pen,
Which, world-wide, echo Channing's fame
As one of Heaven's anointed men,
Have sanctified his name.

In vain shall Rome her portals bar,
And shut from him her saintly prize,
Whom, in the *world's* great calendar,
All men shall canonize.

—*John G. Whittier.*

ALWAYS YOUNG FOR LIBERTY.

[In the year 1830, when the tidings came of the revolution in Paris which dethroned Charles the Tenth, Dr. Channing hurried from Newport to Boston, to exchange congratulations with his friends on the subject, but found them unexpectedly cold and unsympathizing. He could not understand it. Meeting one of them, he said, "Are you, too, so old and so wise as to feel no enthusiasm for the heroes of the Polytechnic School?" "Ah!" replied his friend, "you are the youngest man I have met with." "Yes," said Channing, "always young for liberty."]

Charming when thou wast living among men,
Thy pulse, that beat not always with the strong,
Full tide of health, when thou didst hear of wrong
O'erthrown, of freedom won, was once again
As quick and warm as in thy childhood, when
Thou heardst old ocean's mighty thunder-song
Beating familiar cliffs and crags along;
And thou didst glow as ardently as then,
Yes, thou wast always young for liberty;
And when a hundred years have passed away,
Aye, and a thousand, from thy natal day,
Thy never-dying spirit still shall be
As young for Freedom as, when here of old,
In her great name thou wast the boldest of the bold.

—*John W. Chadwick.*

MEMORIAL NOTES.

BROOKLYN.—The exercises at Dr. Putnam's church, begin Tuesday evening, with a discourse by Dr. Peabody, of Harvard college. On Wednesday morning a conference meeting to be addressed by numerous ministers and laymen. In the evening a mass meeting at the Academy of Music, at which Drs. Rufus Ellis, E. H. Chapin, Geo. Wm. Curtis Esq. and Robert Collyer are to speak.

NEWPORT, Channing's birth-place.—Exercises will be introduced Tuesday evening, April 6, with a sermon by G. W. Hosmer, D. D. At 10:45 a. m. of the 7th, Dr. Bellows, of New York, will deliver the commemorative discourse. At 1:30 p. m. there will be a social gathering at the Aquidneck House. At 2:30 p. m., laying of the corner stone of the memorial church, to aid in the building of which the Unitarians of the country contribute $50,000. Rev. Wm. H. Channing of London, delivers the address. At 7:30 in the evening a mass meeting will be held at the Opera House. Special trains will be run from Boston and other points for the accommodation of visitors.

CINCINNATI, the Unitarian and Universalist Churches together with such representatives of other churches as may choose to respond, will celebrate Channing's Centennial year in fitting fashion. A morning service at the Unitarian Church, with Mr. Alger to preach the sermon commemoratory. In the evening a union meeting at the Universalist Church, with addresses.

CHANNING AMONG ORTHODOX MINISTERS.—There have been distributed throughout the West, from the Brooks Fund, by the A. U. A., and donated by friends and admirers of Dr. Channing, who believed in the good his works would do, some 5,000 copies of his works, and they have been warmly welcomed by ministers of all denominations, carefully and appreciatively perused, as letters from many of the recipients emphatically affirm.

JANESVILLE, WIS.,—The commemorative service will be held here on Wednesday evening. There will be singing by the children, addresses by several prominent lawyers of the city. The pastors of the several churches were invited to participate, the two Methodist ministers accepted and the Rector of one of the Episcopal churches responded, "I should not have the slightest hesitancy in responding heartily to the invitation to join in commemorating the Great and Good Channing, whom I heartily admire, did not absence prevent."

UNITY.—From present indications this little missionary of "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion," is to to have an important part to play in the various anniversaries, held throughout the country. Among the orders already in for extra copies, are the following: Chicago, 1,000 copies; Milwaukee, 100; Cincinnati, 300; Franklin, Falls, N. H., 100; Cleveland, 200; Ann Arbor, 200; Brooklyn, N. Y., 200; Montpelier, Vt., 80; Buffalo, N. Y., 100; New York City, 200; Burlington, Vt., 150; Philadelphia, 100.

The next issue of *Unity* will contain the remainder of Prof. Allen's paper, in which he discusses chiefly Channing's relation to the Slavery agitation; a paper on Channing's relation to the Unitarian movement, by Wm. C. Gannett, and one on Channing as a Reformer, by Dr. Walker, all of which are crowded out of present issue, for want of space.

BOSTON, MASS.—The principal Commemorative Service will be held in the Arlington Street Church on Wednesday evening, 7th inst., Drs. J. Freeman Clarke, Lothrop, Bartol, and William Henry Channing, nephew and biographer of him whose 100th birth-day they celebrate, taking part in the exercises. This is the church with which Dr. Channing labored for over forty years. The exercises must be of such a character as to draw together the leading spirits of this metropolis of free thought and liberal religion in America.

—A Children's Channing Service will be held in the Church of the Disciples (J. F. Clarke's) at 2:30 p. m., Sunday, April 4, at 2:30 p. m., five Sunday Schools uniting, Revs. Hale, Tilden, Savage, Carpenter and Clarke addressing the children.

—Rev. Dr. Furness, of Philadelphia, one of the oldest and noblest ministers of the Unitarian fraternity, is to deliver a discourse on Channing during anniversary week.

—At the last meeting of the American Unitarian Association, a committee, consisting of H. P. Kidder, Chas. G. Wood and R. R. Shippen, was appointed to take steps toward erecting a Channing building in Boston suitable to be the headquarters of the Unitarian work.

—James Freeman Clarke delivered what the *Register* calls a remarkable sermon on the 21st ult. on the "Influence of Channing's Theology," a reply to the recent tilt of Joseph Cook against what he calls the "pale negations" of Channing. The discourse may be looked for in this week's *Register*. The *Register* also announces that the sermon preached by Dr. Orville Dewey in 1842 on the death of Channing, is reprinted for distribution by the A. U. A. 17, Tremont Place, Boston. It further says that some who are competent to judge, pronounce this "the wisest and best of them all."

CHICAGO, ILLS.—Tne following circular letter has been widely circulated and explains itself:

Wednesday, April 7, 1880, will be the centenary birthday of WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING, and we feel that the occasion should not pass by without some public honor to the memory of one who, whether in Religion, in Patriotism, in Philanthropy, or in Literature, stands amongst America's greatest men.

As one of the foremost of modern Religious Teachers, whose name and writings are dear to thoughtful men in every church; who to the fearless freedom which made him the leader of Religious Liberalism, united a tender catholic spirit and a fervent piety which have raised him above all mere sectarian relations;

—as one whose great influence through a long ministry did much to direct religious earnestness into those practical channels which have made New England the center of Education and Philanthropy;

—as one whose voice and pen were among the foremost of those which in "America's martyr-age" aroused the conscience of the nation to the wrongfulness and peril of slavery;

—as one whose ringing and eloquent words helped to foster the noblest spirit of Christian Patriotism;

—and as one of the first and greatest of American Writers, whose works, translated into almost every European language, have taken a permanent place in the literature of the world;—

we conceive that the Centenary of his birth may be fitly commemorated by some public opportunity of doing honor to his character and to his work.

It is proposed, therefore, to hold a public Celebration at the Central Music Hall, at which short commemorative addresses may be given; and we cordially invite you to participate, and to allow us to use your name with ours as members of the general committee.

GEORGE E. ADAMS, *Chairman of Committee*,
166 La Salle St.

To whom communications may be addressed.

MURRY NELSON,	W. H. RYDER,
HENRY STRONG,	D. L. SHOREY,
DAVID SWING,	THOS. F. WITHROW,
GALUSHA ANDERSON,	E. I. GALVIN,
WM. F. POOLE,	EDSON KEITH,
E. G. MASON,	MARSHALL FIELD,
JAMES L. HIGH,	J. D. HARVEY,
BROOKE HERFORD,	JEROME BEECHER,
WIRT DEXTER,	J. M. WANZER,
N. K. FAIRBANK,	JAMES. H. SWAN,
H. W. THOMAS,	ELDRIDGE G. KEITH,
O. S. A. SPRAGUE,	JOHN M. CLARK,

And many others (Episcopalian, Baptist, Presbyterian, Methodist, Jew, &c.)

1780. MEMORIAL SELECTIONS 1880.

FROM THE WRITINGS OF

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

Born in Newport, Rhode Island, April 7, 1780.

[It has been the object in these brief Selections to present some of the leading thoughts of the great preacher. Here and there a sentence has been condensed, but without change of word or modification of idea. The references are to the six-volume edition of Channing's Works and to the more recent volume *The Perfect Life.*—F. L. H.]

REASON.—Our rational nature is the greatest gift of God . . . and no doctrine which degrades it can come from its Author. . . . It is the fashion with some to decry Reason and to set up Revelation as an opposite authority. This error, though countenanced by good men, ought to be earnestly withstood. It places our religion in hostility to human nature, and gives to its adversaries the credit of vindicating the rights and noblest powers of the mind. . . . I ought not to sacrifice to any religion that Reason which lifts me above the brute and constitutes me a man. Revelation rests on the authority of Reason. To this faculty it submits the evidences of its truth, and nothing but the approving sentence of Reason binds us to receive and obey it.—(iv. 32, 40.)

SOURCES OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH MANIFOLD.—We cannot find language to express the worth of the illumination given through Jesus Christ. But we shall err greatly if we imagine that his gospel is the only light, that every ray comes to us from a single book, that no splendors issue from God's works and providence, that we have no teacher in religion but the few pages bound up in our bibles. . . . We live amidst a host of teachers of moral and religious truth. Unsought, unpaid, they beset our path. Rejected, they still plead. They begin their ministry with our first breath; they do not forsake us in the last hour.—(P. L. 33–34.)

SCIENCE AND RELIGION.—All true Science is essentially religious. It springs from the intuition of permanent and universal Law in nature. It looks upon Nature as a complex whole, all parts of which are bound together and are co-working for the common good. These harmonies, connexions, general laws, and common purposes are all the emanation and expression of a supreme and disposing Mind. They are Divine Intelligence made visible. It is then the INTELLIGENCE pervading Nature that Science studies. . . . The tendencies of Science are all towards God.—(P. L. 207–8.)

UNIVERSALITY OF RELIGIOUS IDEAS.—I believe, and rejoice to believe, that a ray from Heaven descends on the path of every fellow-creature. (iv. 44.)

The heathen had their Revelation. Light from heaven descended upon their souls. God shone within them under the ideas of justice, goodness, and duty. No nation has been found, however sunk and degraded, on which these lights have not dawned. In every human soul there is a voice that whispers of the Right, a reprover that strikes awe and awakens compunction, a prophet and judge that points, however indistinctly, to final Retribution. In the rudest tribes we find some recognition of a Higher Power, some glimpse of a future life. . . . The Father has had many a temple in hearts which never knew his name.—(P. L. 62–63.)

HUMAN NATURE.—How little do we know ourselves! How unjust are we to ourselves! We study everything else but the Divine Principle within our own Persons . . . We need a new Revelation—not of heaven or hell—but of the SPIRIT within ourselves.—(P. L. 54.)

The most lamentable skepticism on earth, and incomparably the most common, is a skepticism as to the greatness, powers and high destinies of human nature. In this greatness I desire to cherish an unwavering faith.—(iv. 149.)

The faith which is most wanted is a faith in the divine germ in every soul. In regard to most of what are called the mysteries of religion, we may innocently be ignorant. But the mystery within ourselves it behooves us to explore. Happy are they who have begun to penetrate it, and in whom it has awakened feelings of awe towards themselves, and of deep interest and honor towards their fellow-men.—(iii. 314.)

BROTHERHOOD.—Alas! we lack *humanity.* We talk of it, we profess it, but we contradict its essential principles in character and in life. We rear partition walls of distinction between ourselves and our fellow-beings. Unconsciously and perpetually we violate man's highest right, the right to be regarded and treated as a Child of God. Until men's eyes shall be purged to discern in one another, even in the most degraded and fallen, a ray of the Divinity, the true bond of communion will be wanting between man and man. . . . But a Better Day is coming. Cannot we become the heralds of this Better Day?—(P. L. 78–79.)

IMMORTALITY.—The germ of this great truth is in our Nature; in the Conscience that includes as one of its elements a presentiment of retribution; in the Reason that beholds in the present an incomplete destiny; in the thirst for Happiness that is too deep to be satisfied on earth; . . . in the love of moral Goodness and Beauty, which, in proportion as it is cultivated, awakens the Ideal of spotless virtue and a desire of community with the all-perfect One.—(P. L. 32.)

Faith in Immortality is but the supreme form of foresight and hope.—(P. L. 180.)

RELATION OF HERE AND HEREAFTER.—If we are to live again, let us settle it as a sure fact that we shall carry with us our present minds such as we now make them. Every act which affects character will reach in its influence beyond the grave. We are now framing our future lot. 'He who does a bad deed says, more strongly than words can utter, 'I cast away a portion of future good, I resolve on future pain.'—(iv. 161.) Goodness cherished now is Eternal Life already entered on.—(P.L. 117.)

JESUS.—Place Jesus in what rank you will, is it not after all the excellence of his CHARACTER which you count the best of all his endowments? . . . His real throne is the empire that tried and triumphant Virtue gives.—(P. L. 268–269.)

SALVATION BY CHARACTER.—Expect no good from Jesus any farther than you clothe yourself with excellence.—(iv. 149.) The only redemption of a human being is the recovery of his spirit from moral evil—from whatever stains and debases it—to the purity, philanthropy, piety and perfectness of a Child of God.—(P. L. 282.)

THE UNIVERSAL FATHER.—The Universe teaches that God is the God of ALL, and not of the few. . . . Providence has no favorites. The lesson of the Universe is God's impartiality. He has One Law, One Love for all.—(P. L. 67, 69.)

INDIVIDUALITY.—No man should part with his individuality and aim to become another. No process is so fatal as that which would cast all men in one mold.—(i. 288.)

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

J. LL. J.

"What news abroad i' the world?"

THE FAR WEST.—Joseph Cook thinks that the worst set of savages on our frontier is the pickpocket tribe, and they are all whites.

SKEPTICISM.—The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* suspects Joseph Cook of gullibility, and seems to think that a little scientific skepticism is good at times, Mr. Cook having recently interviewed "psychic" (the force that makes mediums). But this paper remarks that his conclusions concerning psychic forces and spiritualism show that he is not sufficiently imbued with scientific skepticism to be a reliable investigator of these phenomena.

MICHIGAN.—Rev. F. E. Kittredge, of Muskegon, has been appointed State Missionary and Financial Agent by the officers of the State Unitarian Conference. Mr. Kittredge will take a needed respite from the fatigues of the parish, and will devote his whole time to the field. Arrangements are being made for Conferences at East Saginaw and Port Huron, to be held soon. As this missionary goes about, preaching the gospel of Unity, he will also take subscriptions for this *Unity*, which will always aim to second his missionary motions.

FORT WAYNE, IND.—Rev. T. N. Glover, of the Universalist fraternity, has been working up the Liberal element in this locality. He says: "I am laboring to make this section of the world understand that Unitarianism and Universalism are one." He believes in tracts and has found a people who will read them, and wants 1,500 for distribution, of the words of Sunderland, James Freeman Clarke, and others. The tract has sunk very low in public estimation, and it is refreshing to find those who have sufficient faith in it to attempt to use it in the interests of sense and progress.

ENGLAND.—The Secularists are advocating the introduction of dancing into Sunday Schools. Glad as we are of any indication of growing cheerfulness in modern life, which in too many cases assumes far too somber hues, yet we can but feel that the attempt to carry the fascination of the dance into the one brief hour of the week set aside for sober talks on serious matters, is based upon an utter failure to realize how hungry a child's mind is for light upon grave questions, and withal how happy children may be made in the hopeful song, the tender trust and kindly conference found in a well organized liberal Sunday School.

ROCKFORD, ILL.—The joint session of the Wisconsin Unitarian Conference and the Illinois Fraternity, convenes at this place the 13th, 14th and 15th of April. Papers will be read on "What is the Bible to those who reject Plenary Inspiration?" by R. L. Herbert; "Organized Charity," by E. I. Galvin; "The Problem of our Western Unitarian Churches," by S.S. Hunting; "Herbert Spencer's Data of Ethics," by Jenk. Ll. Jones. The opening sermon to be preached by Brooke Herford, of Chicago,—H. M. Simmons, of Madison, preaching Wednesday evening. A cordial invitation is extended by the Secretaries to all who believe in "more light." Those who read this are requested to extend the notice.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.—M. J. Savage, of Boston, preached in Mr. Wendte's church on the 21st ult., lectured in the afternoon in the Unity Course at the Opera House, visited Antioch College also, delighting goodly-sized audiences in each case. In his sermon on the "Work of a True Church," he states the case for most of the pillars of *Unity*, if not for *Unity* itself: "I said I was not a partisan of Unitarianism. If, when I am done, you shall think I have preached a Unitarian sermon, I beg you to notice that the reason lies in the fact that Unitarianism is not so much a fixed system of belief or a pretended infallibility as it is a *method* of religious study and life. And this method is one that not only permits, but encourages a simple, humble, free study of the laws and ways of God as the right, not only, but the first great duty of man."

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Under this head we will hereafter notice all books, pamphlets, and magazines received at this office from publishers, with price and such editorial comment as our space will admit; thus giving to publishers an advertising medium which will introduce their Liberal and Progressive publications to the most appreciative class of readers.

Any publications noticed in this column can be ordered from this office.

THE VICTORY OVER DEATH, J. W. Chadwick's sermon for March, published monthly, annual series 50 cents, single copies 6 cents.

UNITY CHURCH, An historical sketch prepared for the celebration of the emancipation of Unity Church, of Chicago, from all its indebtedness Nov. 17, 1879; containing also, Constitution and by-laws of this society, pph. 24 pp. A racy sketch of 23 years vigorous life of a living church.

MEMORIALS of the celebration of the 50th. anniversary of the First Congregational Church of Cincinnati, pph. 70 pp. This anniversary was held on the 21, of Jan., 1880. It contains much interesting material concerning this pioneer Unitarian church West of the Alleghanies and Mother of the Western Unitarian Conference.

ETHNIC RELIGION, lessons to be learned from the study of a lecture by Rev. Albert Walkley, of Keene, N. H.; pamphlet, 8 pp., printed for private distribution. A very just and interesting argument for the study of comparative religion. "Let us come forth and claim as our heritage all the truth God has revealed to the great and good of the past. They are ours. By doing this we lose nothing; we have laid aside none, but taken in others."

THE GOOD IN ALL CHURCHES; a lecture by Rev. J. H. Crooker, of Laporte, Ind. Pamphlet, 8 pp. As Mr. Walkley pleads for appreciation of the differing religions of the world, Mr. Crooker pleads with admirable eloquence for the good in all the sects of Christendom. It is among the best of the frank discussions of the intolerance of Ingersoll which we have seen; an admirable campaign document for him who would do missionary work among bigoted haters of bigotry.

CHURCH AND STAGE, by Geo. W. Tryon, jr.; Philadelphia. Pamphlet, 12 pp. An argument for the Christian use of the stage, and an appeal to ministers and their constituency to actively engage in the elevation of the drama. "Let the thousands of the clergy and church-members throughout our country make known their intention to support every worthy play—to absent themselves from every objectionable one—and they would soon find their numbers so immensely reinforced by those who live apart from denominational connection as to make their combined influence irresistable."

I would just as soon disbelieve in God as contemplate a character like Dr. Channing's, and hesitate to say whether that was a divine image or not; whether those deeds and that life were the product of evil or the fruit of the heavenly Spirit. —*F. W. Robertson.*

If anything would move Channing's spirit to indignation in his heavenly state, and make his bones stir in their resting place, it would be the knowledge that his name was used as a block to the progress of religious thought.—*Henry W. Bellows, D. D.*

UNITY.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS.

Memorial Number.—The present issue is dedicated to the memory of William Ellery Channing, the centenary of whose birth occurs on the 7th inst., and is enlarged to twenty-four pages, containing much matter not obtainable elsewhere. It is designed to use this number for distribution at the various commemorative services held throughout the land. For this purpose a special edition is struck off and shipped at the rate of $5.00 per hundred or $40.00 per thousand. Parties wishing copies for distribution are requested to send in their orders promptly.

Unity, Vols. III and IV,—indexed and bound, half leather, cloth sides and lettered backs, making a handsome volume of 388 pages, sent for $1.75. Subscribers returning the year's numbers can have them bound with index for $1.00. Index furnished for ten cents. This book contains the twelve articles on "The Growth of Doctrine, or the Old-New Creed;" the twelve articles on the "Liberal Preachers out of the Pulpit," and other matter of permanent value, making a desirable addition to the library of the believer in "Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion." Vols. I and II, bound separately, in flexible cloth, with index, can be supplied at 50 cents per volume. The three volumes together "*Unity*" complete up to March 1, 1880, sent by express for $2.25.

Unity Sunday School Lessons.—Owing to the press of matter, the last lesson on the Growth of the Hebrew Religion is crowded out, and will appear in our next. May 1st we will begin the course of eight Lessons on "Channing and the Unitarian Movement," to be followed in the autumn by a similar series on "Theodore Parker and the Critical and Transcendental Movement." Simultaneously with their appearance in *Unity*, these lessons will be issued in lesson slips, suitable for use in the school.

Editorial Management.—With the beginning of this volume, J. Ll. Jones assumed editorial charge, and hereafter all Contributed Articles, Editorial Notes, Items of News, Books and Publications for Review, are requested to be sent to his address,—Janesville, Wis.,—all business communications, moneys, exchanges, &c., as before, to Frances L. Roberts, 75 Madison street, Chicago. The following departments will be maintained as regularly as practicable through the year:

1. *Editorial Notes* occupying the first two pages.
2. *Contributed and Editorial Articles.* In this department we hope to publish a series of twelve articles on Liberal Preachers out of the Pulpit in England, similar in character to the series on American Worthies, published last year.
3. *Exchange Table*, containing such citations from the current press as tell for *Unity* or echo its motto,—in charge of a special editor.
4. *Notes from the Field*, by J. Ll. Jones.
5. *Publications received and reviews of recent books.*
6. *Possibly a Unity Club and Pastors' Page.*
7. *Sunday School Lesson Department*, in charge of W. C. Gannett.
8. *Scriptures Old and New*, contributed irregularily by F. L. Hosmer.
9. *Business and Advertising Department.*

Lend a Hand.—Now is the time to strengthen the bands of "Unity." If each of our patrons would but cause two blades of grass to grow, where there is now but one, in the subscription fields of "Unity," its usefulness would be increased, and the strain on the management would be decreased in two fold ratio,

Channing's Works and Memoirs.—The following publications, as well as any other liberal books now in the market, may be ordered from Unity office, sent post paid, on receipt of price.

Channing's Complete works, 3 vols., published by A. U. A.....$3 00
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Photographs from Gambardella's celebrated painting of Dr. Channing, in three sizes,—Life, Cabinet, and Card.—at $5.00, 35 cents, and 20 cents, respectively. The two latter sent to any address, postage paid, on receipt of price; the life size measuring (28 by 22 inches) securely packed for transportation without charge, but expressage to be paid by purchaser.

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